

PROBABLE INCIDENTS.


BRITISH
30
60
JUN

Probable Incidents:

OR,

SCENES IN LIFE,

A NOVEL, BY

HENRY SUMMERSETT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,
AT THE
Minerva-Press,
LEADENHALL-STREET.

M.DCC.XCVII.


BRITISH
30
60
JUN

PROBABLE INCIDENTS:

OR,

SCENES IN LIFE.

CHAP. I.

MR. Barclay was a private gentleman, of ſmall fortune, which would have been noble had not his anceſtors laviſhed away their eſtates, in unbounded prodigality; ſo that, when he was left the ſole remaining branch of this once extenſive and flouriſhing family, he found himſelf not ſufficiently rich to live without applying to buſineſs, or

looking out for a wife among the Dames of the metropolis; the latter plan was beſt reliſhed by him. Diſpoſing, therefore, of his little remaining property, by auction, which altogether amounted to the ſum of five hundred pounds, he entered a ſtage coach, which was paſſing through his native village, and in the evening of the ſame day, found himſelf among all the buſtle of the great commercial city.

He determined on ſpending that night at the inn, where he had alighted from the ſtage, and, having ate his ſupper, he retired to bed. On the following morning he roſe refreſhed, and having paid his bill, ſauntered into the ſtreets in queſt of an eſtabliſhed lodging.



lodging. He ſoon ſaw a great number of windows ornamented with labels, and the firſt houſe he applied to ſuited him very well. A bargain was immediately made; and on that ſame day he took poſſeſſion of the ſecond floor, in the houſe of a taylor, ſituated in the city. He was poſſeſſed of a handſome perſon, an agreeable diſpoſition, and a ſound underſtanding. — Though his education had been ſomewhat neglected, yet his natural qualifications made amends for this deficiency, and his wit flowed with eaſe and abundance.

One day a young lady, who was paſſing the door, fell down and ſprained her ancle. Barclay, who ſaw the accident, ran immediately to her aſſiſ-

tance, and, without ceremony, took her into his arms, and carried her into the houſe. She very politely thanked him for the ſolicitude that he had ſhewn, and begged him to procure her a chair to take her home, as ſhe found herſelf incapable of walking, and was unwilling to ſend for her carriage, fearing to alarm her family. Barclay obeyed her orders; and having put her gently into a chair, requeſted permiſſion to attend her, which ſhe refuſed, ſaying, at the ſame time, that ſhe ſhould be happy to ſee him the next day, and at her own houſe. With this he was obliged to be content, and after leaving with him her card, the chairmen trotted away with her, and likewiſe with Barclay's heart. On the following morning, with the moſt pleaſing emo-

tions,

tions, he knocked at the door of the fair ſtranger, and, having previouſly ſent up his name, was admitted into her preſence. He found her lively, though ſhe ſuffered much pain; he likewiſe found her very grateful, and deſirous of acknowledging her obligations.

After an interview, rather than faſhionable viſit, Barclay, though with regret, wiſhed her a good morning, having previouſly obtained leave to continue his viſits. Every morning, for a fortnight after, he ſucceſſively paſſed an happy hour with Miſs Melford, who was now perfectly free from pain. In ſhort, not to dwell upon incidents, two months after their firſt acquaintance, Louiſa Melford dropped

from a ſecond-floor window into the arms of her lover, who, enchanted with the prize, hurried her into an hired chaiſe; and with the aſſiſtance of the blind deity, a chamber-maid who well underſtood her profeſſion, and a fine bright moon, ſet off with rapidity for the northern road of matrimony, without giving the leaſt alarm to the unſuſpecting family.

It is almoſt time to inform my readers who Miſs Melford was: Her parents had been dead ſeveral years, and left her, with a fortune of ten thouſand pounds, to the care of her uncle, Mr. George Melford, a reſpectable merchant, who had his orphan niece educated at a a public boarding ſchool, according to the ſyſtem of the faſhionable

faſhionable world. When very young ſhe was all ſpirit and animation; ſhe had a natural deſire to do *innocent miſchief*, and was actually once publicly puniſhed for ſetting fire to the governeſs's *tete*. She diſplayed a very ready wit, but it was of the moſt ſatirical kind; work ſhe abhorred, and preferred romping with a tom-boy companion to drawling out a minuet with the dancing maſter.

When ſhe arrived at the age of fifteen Mr. Melford took her from this ſeminary, and, in his opinion, wonderfully improved. He was pleaſed with the gaiety of her diſpoſition, and incautiouſly encouraged her wild fancy, which was never ſettled, but always fantaſtically roving. His circle of acquaintance

acquaintance was extenſive and genteel. Louiſa was ſoon after introduced into the world. Her beauty and perſonal attractions did not paſs unnoticed; ſhe had a variety of admirers, and even titled lovers made propoſals to old Melford. But Louiſa was not in the mood to tie herſelf to domeſtic duties; and though many traits of the coquette were viſible in her nature, yet her heart was invulnerable to their groſs flattery, with which ſhe however affected to be pleaſed, although ſhe deſpiſed the men who uttered it. — Thus was ſhe continually in ſearch of pleaſure, when accident threw her into Barclay's way. At the firſt and ſecond interview ſhe felt nothing more than ſimple gratitude; but at length there appeared to her ſomething ſo inſinuating

ting in his manner, that ſhe did not ſcruple to hint to her ſerving maid her love for Barclay. The traits of this maid were characteriſtic of ladies in her line of buſineſs; ſhe had art enough to diſcover the true ſtate of almoſt every individual thing, and as occaſion required ſhe was pert, obſequious, fawning, and inquiſitive. The ſecret, with which her miſtreſs had intruſted her, ſhe ſoon communicated to the moſt intereſted perſon, and ſhe valued the complimentary guinea much more than the nonſenſe that had procured it.

The conſequence of this diſcovery has been related; we ſhall, therefore, go back to the matrimonial pair in Scotland. Barclay was as happy as good fortune could poſſibly make a man;

man; and he was delighted to ſee Louiſa retain her vivacity, without regretting what ſhe had done. About a fortnight after, the young adventurers returned to London. Barclay carried his wife to his former lodgings, not knowing what her reception might be at the houſe of her uncle, who, he learned, was much incenſed at her elopement: however, the next morning Mrs. Barclay inſiſted upon going to viſit him, not doubting but that ſhe had power to reconcile him, and make him again affectionately receive her. With theſe good hopes, and accompanied by her huſband, ſhe jumped into a coach, and gave directions to be driven to the houſe from which ſhe had ſo lately abſconded.

But

But how great was her mortification! when, after having ſent an intimation to her uncle of her being there, ſhe received a laconic and ſevere note, ſpecifying his diſpleaſure, and alſo that her fortune ſhould be immediately paid to her huſband; but that ſhe had not, nor ever hereafter ſhould have, any further claim upon his love or friendſhip. To deſcribe the juſt feelings of Mrs. Barclay is impoſſible; nothing but pride could preſerve her from fainting, and in ſpite of all the fortitude ſhe could aſſume ſhe burſt into tears. She did not indulge her ſorrow; but within a few minutes, and with cool deliberation, ſhe returned her uncle an anſwer, fraught with contempt, and upbraided him for the want of affection and humanity. Having ſent

ſent it up to him ſhe gave her hand to Barclay, who led her to the coach.

On the next day an attorney waited upon her with her fortune, and receipts for Barclay to ſign, which being done the gentleman withdrew, when Mrs. Barclay ſeemed perfectly ſatisfied and compoſed, though ſhe was diſappointed of becoming the heireſs of the rich Mr. George Melford, which ſhe, as well as the world, had hitherto expected. — Plans were now laid before Barclay for the future manner of living. A houſe was immediately taken in Portman-Square; liveries were ordered, and a ſplendid coach rattled through the ſtreets with the truly faſhionable Mrs. Barclay. Accuſtomed to pleaſure, and all the gay enjoyments of life,

from

from the days of her childhood, ſhe could not think of changing the ſtile of her living, for ſhe had always delighted in it. Happineſs, ſhe thought, conſiſted in purſuing the paths of faſhion; and the calm inſipidity of domeſtic life appeared to her inſupportable.

Barclay, at this time, was only twenty-four years of age, and the gaiety of his diſpoſition led him to join in the diſſipations of his wife, without thinking of the injury it was doing to their fortune. Routs, dinners, balls, and other polite entertainments, were conſtantly, and daily, prepared for the ſons and daughters of mirth, feſtivity, and faſhion. In this manner ſix months paſſed gaily away, and to the intire

ſatisfaction of Mrs. Barclay. But upon inſpecting into his pecuniary affairs, the ſurpriſe of Barclay amounted almoſt to perfect aſtoniſhment; for he found that the purchaſe of their recent pleaſures, including their joint loſſes at play, was the full ſum of four thouſand pounds! An expoſtulation with his lady took place; the danger of continuing in town was pointed out to her, and a journey into the country peremptorily inſiſted upon.

To this Louiſa readily agreed; but it was not œconomical motives induced her to acquieſe in this propoſal; the town was growing thin of company, and to continue there without amuſement was as bad as the dulneſs of a diſtant village. — Barclay was pleaſed

on

on obtaining this conſent, for he had expected a forcible oppoſition; he immediately hired a ſmall houſe in Eſſex, and diſpoſing of his carriage and horſes, and diſcarding the ſuperfluous ſervants, he bade adieu to London; and, about a week after, found himſelf happy as a domeſticated man, in his little manſion, and only with his wife and two ſervants.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

"INDEED, George," ſaid Mrs. Barclay, one morning as ſhe was at breakfaſt, "this is a melancholy life! nothing to be ſeen but trees, meadows, and ugly thatched houſes. Here have we been a whole month, and, in that time, have not received a ſingle viſit. Indeed, I greatly fear that I ſhall grow quite a ruſtic, and forget the manners of the town before we again viſit it."

"Be

"Be under no apprehenſion, my dear," replied Barclay, "for, if I continue in my preſent mind, I ſhall not go to London any more. Our living there has already done us irreparable miſchief, and now I am fairly freed from it's pernicious power, nothing ſhall tempt me to the ſnare again."

"How, ſir!" cried Mrs. Barclay, riſing from her ſeat, and throwing a book on the floor, "not go to London any more! I am reſolved to go in November; you may remain here if you pleaſe, but *I* ſhall follow *my own* inclinations. Tell me, ſir, if I have experienced a ſingle pleaſure ſince my arrival? Every day brings the ſame enjoyments, as *you* call them, and my

only recourſe from abſolute ſolitude is the converſation of—*an huſband.*"

The diſſatisfaction of her looks, and the ſtrong emphaſis that ſhe beſtowed upon the laſt words, raiſed the reſentment of Barclay, and provoked him to aſſume an auſterity and power, which he had never ſhewn before. He ſwore he would paſs the whole winter in the cottage, and that ſhe ſhould not quit it if he had the power to detain her. When November arrived, Mrs. Barclay was, however, reſolutely fixed on her journey, and Barclay, ſtill too fond to give her uneaſineſs, did not oppoſe her.

About the middle of the ſame month they left the village, and were ſoon conveyed

conveyed to London; which place Barclay entered with reflections rather gloomy, and his wife with the greateſt rapture. An houſe was again taken; ſix additional ſervants were placed with the ſolitary couple that they had retained, and again Mrs. Barclay ſhone in the ſplendor of a woman of *ton*. But while ſhe thus unthinkingly followed faſhion and folly, the heart of Barclay was ſeverely wounded. He ſaw that nothing but his complete ruin would ſtop her progreſs in diſſipation; and every night retired with pain to his ſolitary bed, which, to avoid the complaints of an injured huſband, Mrs. Barclay ſtudiouſly ſhunned. Thus, when ſhe was all gaiety, he was ſinking in affliction and deſpair; and, at length, was declared by the doctors to be in

imminent danger. He was confined to his bed by their desire, and when Mrs. Barclay was informed of his actual danger, she flew to him with returning love and repentance, scarcely leaving for a minute the room in which he was confined.

His fever daily increased, as did also the fears of the doctors who attended him. Louisa was almost distracted; and Barclay had prepared himself for the presence of the Supreme Being. At length nature was exhausted. Sensible of his approaching dissolution, Barclay entreated his wife to leave the room; but she could not be persuaded to suffer him to die, without being near to him. Well as his strength would permit him, he took a solemn farewell

of

of his unhappy wife, who accuſed herſelf as the wretched cauſe of his preſent ſufferings, and ſhortly after an heavy groan declared the triumph of death. The ſound vibrated in Louiſa's ears; ſhe ſhrieked, and in the violence of grief threw herſelf upon the body.

She recovered from inſenſibility, but to endure more pain and ſorrow; for, after a ſtruggle of ſome hours, ſhe was the mother of a male infant, whoſe birth was diſtinguiſhed by a variety of afflictions. We have already ſaid that, when they left London, the fortune which ſhe had brought to him, was reduced to five thouſand pounds. When they again returned to that place, the ſtile of Mrs. Barclay ſoon made it conſiderably ſmaller; and, to

complete the wreck, ſhe had loſt at play, to people of *quality*, two thouſand pounds. Such were the follies of this infatuated woman.

Contrary to general expectation ſhe recovered, and the child thrived charmingly. The only pleaſure of the mother was to gaze on the infant's face, and repeat the name of its loſt parent. This was the *pleaſure of ſenſibility*; it was compoſed of joy and ſorrow. When enabled to leave her chamber ſhe adjuſted her affairs, as well as ſhe poſſibly could, and reſerving ſix hundred pounds only, ſhe left the remaining part of her property to be divided among her creditors. With her ſoul full of penitence, and ſelf-accuſations, the lovely widow, with her infant at her

her breaſt, departed from the city, in which ſhe had, with delight, paſſed her days.

In a Kentiſh village, about ten miles diſtant from Dover, ſhe ſought refuge from the purſuits of misfortune, thinking that ſhe could in retirement ſtrictly attend to the maternal duties. She reſided in a cottage, and attended only by a village girl, ſhe waſted the dreary winters nights in tears. Her miſery was heightened by retroſpection. It was now the ſeaſon when, amid luxury, faſhion, and adulation, ſhe had danced along the foremoſt daughter of pleaſure; when ſhe had paſſed ſucceſſive nights, with the allurements which had cauſed her ruin, and deſtroyed the peace of her departed huſband. Now,

ſenſible of her errors, ſhe would gaze upon the child, weep over it, and accuſe herſelf of making it fatherleſs.

Three years of ſorrow paſſed over. Since her arrival her ſolitude had been ſomewhat enlivened by the acquaintance of the wife and daughter of an attorney, who reſided in the village; they ſometimes prevailed on her to make ſmall excurſions with them, which contributed to the amendment of her health. But the genuine ſmile of pleaſure was never ſeen upon her face. Continual indulgence of grief had made it habitual, and ſolitude was moſt pleaſing to her. One day, induced by repeated invitations, ſhe ſat down at Miſs Williamſon's piano-forte, but, before ſhe had touched it,

ſhe

ſhe ſuddenly fell motionleſs on the floor. Miſs Williamſon ſhrieked aloud; ſhe pulled the bell violently, and a ſervant appearing, ſhe diſpatched him for a ſurgeon, while ſhe endeavoured to recover the inanimate cauſe of her terror. This, however, was a fruitleſs effort; ſhe ſhewed not a ſingle ſign of life.

The ſurgeon ſoon after arrived, and though he diſcovered that ſhe ſtill retained life, yet he had ſcarcely an hope of her ſurviving ſo ſevere an attack, the nature of which was paralytic. After uſing many arts to reſtore her, ſhe languidly opened her eyes, and, being conveyed to bed, feebly enquired for her ſon; the child was brought to her; ſhe kiſſed him, and

whiſ-

whiſpered to Mr. Williamſon, "Oh! protect him! in my houſe you will find——" Her head ſunk upon the pillow, and, unable to finiſh the ſentence, ſhe immediately expired. The few words which ſhe uttered did not long remain a myſtery to the ſcrutinizing Williamſon; who immediately went to the cottage, and after a ſhort ſearch diſcovered the bank notes, which ſhe had ſecured for herſelf and infant, and which ſhe had, unthinkingly, never put to any accumulating uſe.

The unfortunate Mrs. Barclay was buried in a becoming manner, attended by Williamſon, all his family, and many reſpectable inhabitants of the pariſh. If ſome part of her life was cenſurable, the latter days of her

mortality intitled her to praiſe. Her unfeigned penitence, for ſhe conſidered herſelf criminal, and her exemplary piety, wiped off the former ſtain, and inſured her a reſidence among the bleſſed. Williamſon reſolved to make himſelf the maſter of whatever he could find, and yet fulfil the laſt deſire of this unfortunate woman. This he put into execution, and the child was accordingly taken into the family, and treated with the greateſt tenderneſs and indulgence.

CHAP. III.

PERMIT us, reader, to paſs over the unintereſting events of the boyiſh days of the ſon of Barclay, and preſent him to you in his eighteenth year, bound to ſerve Mr. Williamſon, in order that he might himſelf become a practitioner in the law. With the elegant and manly figure of his father, he ſhewed the handſome features of his mother. His vivacity never forſook him, unleſs he was attracted by the ſight

ſight of diſtreſs, or the recital of woe; his honeſt heart, on ſuch occaſions, would ſeem to drop within his breaſt, and his eye avow the force of ſympathy. Williamſon had told him the ſtory of his parents, of whom he had no recollection; but, with the policy of a lawyer, concealed the money that his mother had left behind her, and led him to ſuppoſe that he had fallen into his hands an adventitious object of compaſſion.

When Williamſon propoſed to him the practice of the law, he heard it with indifference; but when he conſidered the obligations he owed to this friend, he conſented, without much reluctance, to enter into articles. Two years of his clerkſhip had paſſed away, when

when he began to find his diſlike to the profeſſion too firmly fixed to be conquered; and my Lord Coke met with a reception truly mortifying, ſerving only to ſoften the wooden ſtool on which Barclay ſat to write.

Williamſon was a compound of oddities: he entertained the higheſt opinion of his own political, as well as profeſſional, abilities, and was preſident of the club at the Buck's Head, where national affairs were diſcuſſed every Wedneſday evening by this ſociety; which conſiſted of the Curate, the Surgeon, about twelve jolly Farmers, who were more converſant in the value of pigs, or the conſtruction of a muck-cart, than in politicks; and ſometimes the village Vulcan held forth; and though

though he was only a ſhoer of horſes, and could not manage a metaphor ſo well as Burke, yet the country in general thought him a prodigious *deep one*. Barclay was introduced to theſe grand perſonages. For two or three meetings diffidence kept him ſilent; but when he became more familiar with the ſociety, he was reſolved to try his oratorical abilities, and accordingly made his maiden ſpeech.

The young politician ſurpriſed Williamſon, the Curate, and the Surgeon; every Farmer grinned applauſe, and the Blackſmith was as much aſtoniſhed and confuſed as Vulcan ever was, on diſcovering a new amour of his goddeſs. It was energy, diveſted of bombaſt: it was the pure eſſence of political liberty;

liberty; it breathed the rights of mankind, patriotism, and animated loyalty. The metaphors were judiciously arranged; the epithets well directed, and the accents carefully placed. After this he rose greatly in estimation, and his company was frequently solicited. His want of classical education was scarcely to be discovered; although he had been denied to drink of the fountain-head of learning, yet he had tasted of the springs, and endeavoured to supply the loss as well as he was able. Nature was on his side; she had gifted him with a vigorous intellect, playful fancy, retentive memory, and desire of instruction. From the ancients he could only glean, by reading such translations as he could procure. Of the French language he had gained a tolerable

tolerable knowledge, and thoſe books which he had read tended to his improvement, as well as amuſement. From them, however, aroſe his chief diſcontent; they ſpoke of the world, with which he had an ardent deſire to be acquainted.

Confined in a paltry village, his life was irkſome; but if he engaged in the active ſcenes of life, what would be the reſult? Information, knowledge of the world and its characters, pleaſure, proſperity!—*probably* unhappineſs, misfortune, pain, and adverſity. He had a ſenſe of the favours which Williamſon conferred on him, and could not think of applying for the means of placing him in any other ſituation. He had too much ſpirit and integrity

to claim what conſcience whiſpered to be improper. Still his antipathy was not to be removed, and every day he ſeriouſly thought of changing his ſituation. He had ſimplicity, or rather enthuſiaſm, enough to imagine that, was he to quit the houſe of Mr. Williamſon, he ſhould not ſuffer an particular diſtreſs or inconvenience. He poſſeſſed ſome little vanity, and did not think himſelf undeſerving of either private or public notice; the former he did not much regard, and many expedients, he thought, would probably inſure him the latter. "I will not be thus miſerably confined," cried the enthuſiaſt, one evening after he had retired to his chamber; "no! I will go forward, into the world, and meet its ſcorn and contempt, rather than ſubmit to its dull indifference."

Without

Without allowing time for caution to put in a word, he wrote a ſhort note to Mr. Williamſon, and laid it on the table. He afterwards took a change of linen, and examined into the ſtate of his finances; eight guineas were in his purſe; the ſtore was not, he thought, ſoon to be exhauſted, and he did not doubt but that it would anſwer to every want, 'till he obtained a larger ſupply. He quitted the houſe as ſoon as it was light, and ſoon found himſelf in the turnpike-road; but, whither he was to go, and for what purpoſe, he did not then aſk himſelf. Enthuſiaſm bore him forward, and he was not diſpoſed for reflection; he reſolved to place himſelf in the firſt ſituation that ſhould ſeem pleaſing to him, but of what nature it was to be he then little heeded.

Alas, youth, thy notions were erroneous; the world was as unlike to what thou hadſt conceived it to be, as vice is to virtue!

Hurried by his ideas, and by his romantic ſcheme, he thought not of any mode of conveyance; beſides he had no particular deſtination, and, for a wanderer, a ſtrong pair of legs, and a vigorous body, were as good as a coach and ſix. Our wild hero continued his walk 'till he was about fifteen miles from the village, when he ſtopped to refreſh himſelf. In the preſent part of his quixotic journey, nothing had fixed his intention; ſtill, who could tell the number and quality of the friends he might meet with on the following day. His ardour was unabated, and he walk-

ed ten miles more; when, thinking to reſt himſelf for the night, he entered a village alehouſe, about nine o'clock in a fine ſummer's evening. His appearance being genteel, the landlord obſequiouſly ſhewed him into a parlour, and finding himſelf ſomewhat weary, he threw himſelf into a chair, and deſired to have ſome wine and water.

He had been there about half an hour, when he ſaw a man in livery ride up to the door, and enquire whether there was any accommodation for his maſter, the honourable Mr. Falkenham, who was on the road, at about the diſtance of half a mile, and who would paſs the night at the houſe, if there was any tolerable reception. Barclay's ears were opened wide

to hear the reply of the landlord, who ſaid that he was fearful his accommodation would not be altogether good enough for the gentleman, but that he could let him have a clean room, a decent bed, and plain ſupper. The ſervant rode off again, and, in about a quarter of an hour, returned with his maſter, who diſmounted and walked into the houſe. One room only bore the name of a parlour, and thither the landlord conducted the honourable Mr. Falkenham. Appriſed of the quality of the gueſt, Barclay, with great modeſty, aroſe in order to quit the room; but Mr. Falkenham perceiving his intention, and regarding him with the moſt obliging ſmiles, poſitively aſſured him that he ſhould not withdraw. Barclay politely bowed, and

again

again ſeated himſelf on the chair from which he had riſen.

Mr. Falkenham was a very handſome man, and his appearance was that of a true gentleman; his dreſs was elegantly plain, and his manners were poliſhed and intereſting. But his condeſcenſion was truly aſtoniſhing to Barclay; he begged him to take part of his ſupper, and to drink ſome wine with him afterwards. To this our hero acceded with pleaſure; his vanity was raiſed, and he ſecretly wiſhed that Williamſon could ſee him, ſipping his port with a man of family and fortune. After ſupper, Mr. Falkenham was pleaſed to explain the reaſon of his ſtopping at the Inn.

"I am going," he ſaid, "to viſit my borough; my conſtituents have been in expectation of ſeeing me theſe two months paſt, and I found it impoſſible to keep from them any longer."

Barclay's ſpirit took another flight on hearing theſe few words: he had never expected to hold ſo familiar a converſation with a Member of Parliament.

"I left home," continued the ſenator, "in my chariot; but I had ſcarcely ridden twenty miles, when I thought an horſe would be more pleaſant than a carriage. The weather was lovely and inviting, and the exerciſe would, I imagined, be of ſervice to me; I, therefore, bid my brother, Lord Haughley, adieu, and left him to go

the

the remainder of his journey alone." Mr. Falkenham pauſed a moment, and Barclay politely bowed. "His lordſhip," continued the former, "will conſequently reach the place of our deſtination ſooner than I ſhall. I intended to have rode as far as the next town to night, but being troubled with a bleeding at the noſe, which exerciſe encreaſed, I reſolved to ſtop at the next houſe of reception that I met with, which proved to be this."

Barclay was charmed with Mr. Falkenham's condeſcenſion, and continued to ſpeak with diffidence and reſpect. They had already emptied one bottle, when Mr. Falkenham confeſſed he was ſo well pleaſed with his companion, that he wiſhed to draw another cork before they ſeparated.

CHAP. IV.

ANOTHER cork was accordingly drawn, and Mr. Falkenham's ſervant, who had attended him all the evening, delivered to his maſter a letter, which, with many entreaties for pardon, he confeſſed he had, through forgetfulneſs, kept ſince the morning, when he had taken it from the Poſt-office.

Mr. Falkenham reproved the man for his inattention, ſomewhat ſeverely, ſaying

ſaying that it came from the miniſter; and indeed Barclay thought it almoſt unpardonable to keep ſuch an important letter ſo many hours. Mr. Falkenham, however, read the epiſtle, nodded ſignificantly, and putting aſide all chagrin, diſmiſſed the ſervant. Barclay did not dare to allude to the miniſter's letter, nor did Mr. Falkenham appear deſirous of entering into political converſation. In this reſpect he was very reſerved, and Barclay had too much modeſty, and, likewiſe, too great a ſenſe of the honour already done to him, to dive at the ſecrets of the miniſter's friend.

Their converſation, however, was lively and intereſting, and before the finiſhing of the ſecond bottle, Barclay

had ingenuouſly confeſſed to his honourable aſſociate that he was, though born of reſpectable parents, now in queſt of fortune.

"Your candour," replied Mr. Falkenham, "raiſes my opinion of you. I confeſs I am greatly pleaſed with your manners and appearance, and am deſirous of being your friend. I ſhall return to London in the courſe of three weeks; I have ſome intereſt there, and will endeavour to get you a place under government. *Apropos*, I remember to have the promiſe of an *immediate one*, of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, and it ſhall be your's, if you will meet me in town at the time I have mentioned."

Gratitude

Gratitude is a weak word to expreſs the feelings of Barclay; he gave Mr. Falkenham a thouſand animated thanks, and, likewiſe, the aſſurance of attending him in London, in the courſe of three weeks. Mr. Falkenham wiſhed not to hear theſe effuſions, and begged his companion to defer them 'till the morning; when he would take ſome coffee with him previous to his departure. Barclay, even after this injunction, could ſcarcely conceal his joy, or repreſs the thouſand acknowledgments which hung upon his tongue; he was, however, partly brought to recollection and order, when the landlord came to ſay that, he was extremely ſorry he could not accommodate them with ſeparate chambers, and that they muſt, conſequently, ſleep in a room in

which

which there were two beds. Fearing that this might be diſagreeable to his noble-minded friend, Barclay offered him the entire uſe of the room, and propoſed to ſleep in his chair; but this the other poſitively declined. Soon after they wiſhed each other good night, and retired, at reſpective times, to the chamber.

Barclay did not ſoon go to ſleep: fortune, who had, hitherto, been only negatively civil to him, now ſeemed to wear the face of perfect kindneſs. His circumſtances would be made eaſy; he ſhould move among the great, he ſhould be independent, and all through the goodneſs of Mr. Falkenham! He, at length, fell aſleep, and the ſun had been peeping into his chamber three hours,

hours, or more, when he again uncloſed his eyes. He put aſide the curtains, and found that thoſe belonging to the bed in which Mr. Falkenham ſlept, were undrawn, and, likewiſe, that that gentleman had left his chamber. Fearing that he might delay taking his coffee, Barclay immediately dreſſed himſelf, and went down into the parlour.

" I humbly hope, ſir," he ſaid, as he opened the door, " that I have not made you wait."—But, caſting his eyes around him, he found that he had entered into a ſoliloquy. The landlord ſhortly after appeared; and Barclay immediately enquired after his diſintereſted friend. But his amazement was not ſmall on being informed that,

that, Mr. Falkenham was ſuppoſed to have riſen about the firſt hour of the morning, and had broken the lock of the ſtable door, in order to get his horſes.

"Bleſs me," exclaimed Barclay, "how very ſtrange! was there no letter, no expreſs, from the miniſter?"

"No, our parſon ben't at home," anſwered the landlord.

"Or, perhaps, his brother, Lord Haughley, did not like to appear before his conſtituents without him.—Did no meſſenger come to him during the night?"

"Ha,

"Ha, ha, ha! If he did, ecod he com'd through the key-hole," replied the hoſt.

It appeared very ſingular to Barclay; but, he doubted not, that it was ſome very important occaſion that hurried Mr. Falkenham away; and being, himſelf, eager to reach London, in order that he might get comfortably ſettled before his honourable friend's arrival, he ordered the landlord to bring the bill, that he might diſcharge it, and renew his journey. He was ſtill further ſurpriſed on finding that Mr. Falkenham, in his hurry, had forgotten to pay a part of the bill, and that the ſupper, wine, and even the expences of the ſervant, remained to be ſatisfied by himſelf. But this was

certainly owing to the want of recollection; and as the favours which he ſhould receive, by the means of that gentleman, would be ſo numerous, the ſum of the bill appeared a trifle to him. He, therefore, put his hand into his pocket for his purſe; but, after repeated ſearches, found that all his money, except one ſolitary guinea, was gone from his poſſeſſion.

He looked at his hoſt, and his hoſt looked at him; ſtill no money was to be found, although he recollected putting it into his pocket, about ten minutes before he left his newly acquired friend. But while he was racking himſelf with conjectures, and his round bellied hoſt ſtood ruminating on the probability of his bill being left unpaid,

unpaid, two rough looking fellows, each with a brace of piſtols, ruſhed into the room, and demanded to know whether there were not two ſtrangers in the houſe.

"No," replied the landlord; "I had two laſt night, but they are gone."

"Yes," ſaid Barclay, "one was the honourable Mr. Falkenham, and the other his valet."

The men enquired what manner of perſons they were, and how they were mounted; and being anſwered, one of them exclaimed, "D—n my eyes, but we ſhall nab them yet; the raſcals ſhall not ſlip the nooze, and queer us of the bounty."

Some ſtrange ideas now creeped into Barclay's head, and he began to ſuſpect that the *miniſter's friend* would never obtain him the place under government; in ſhort he began to think (the actual caſe) that the honourable Mr. Falkenham, Lord Haughley's brother, had impoſed upon his credulity, and picked his pocket. This was, by the further evidence of the purſuers, placed beyond all doubt; and he began to execrate the cunning of the ſcoundrels, and to deſpiſe his own want of diſcrimination.

The men, being eager to apprehend theſe notorious impoſters, ſoon after departed, and left Barclay to his reflections. The landlord now demanded only *half* of his bill, which, however,

ſhrunk the remaining guinea of Barclay, and conjured up the moſt unpleaſant ideas. To purſue the raſcals would be folly; to return to Williamſon weakneſs; and to go forward, without money, was certainly hazardous. It was, however, the moſt ſpirited thing that he could poſſibly do. He *could* not be deceived again, and fortune *might* wear a better aſpect on the morrow. He again went forward on the road, chagrined, ill-humoured, and not very ſanguine in hope.

He had walked about three hours, when he drew near to another village: directing his eye from the road he ſaw a barn near to him, and ſeveral people ſtanding before the door of it. To theſe he directed his attention; there

were five men dreſſed in ſhabby-genteel clothes, with ſilk ſtockings, mended and darned ſomewhat above the middle of the leg, and thick cravats, bound over the chin, and not a little the dirtier for wearing. There were likewiſe, four ladies with modern waiſts, dyed ribbons, tattered feathers, and broken ſun-fans. It appeared a very ſingular aſſembly, and Barclay would not have known what they were, had not a ragged and dirty devil came out of the barn, and, mounting a ſhort ladder, paſted a bill upon the huge folding doors. This convinced him they were players, and of that order called ſtrollers. The ladies and gentlemen of the theatre, having juſt gone through the rehearſal, were in the greateſt good humour. Barclay eſpied

an

an alehouſe at a little diſtance, and thither he repaired; he entered the kitchen, and having called for ſome ale, ſat himſelf down by the ſide of a long deal table.

He had not been in this ſituation long before the gentlemen, whom he had ſeen at the theatre, came in, and having refreſhed themſelves with a penny-worth of porter each, they went to chuck-farthing, while the other ſon of Theſpis ſought an amuſement of a different nature. The ſhort fat landlady had juſt taken from the boiler an huge pork dumpling, and placed it before a fellow who drove a ſtage waggon. The appetite of the waggoner was keen, and he put his knife and fork in immediate motion; when

going to put a piece, about three inches ſquare, into his mouth, his arm was arreſted by the player, who conveyed the delicate morſel into his own receptacle. Joey ſtared, and grinned at the ſame time, but ſeemed more cautious in the next application; the player, however, ſnapped at it again, and left the poiſed fork without either cruſt or bacon. The waggoner did not like the joke ſo well the ſecond time, and, taking his plate under his arm, he removed to the other end of the table.

"Ah! by my ſoul," cried the actor, with the true hibernian accent, "the waggon has run away with the horſes. Hey! there they go; ſpeed away,

away, ye half ſtarved, lean gutted devils."

The plate dropped from Joey's hand, and ſuffering the dumpling to roll on the floor, which was plentifully covered with ſand, he flew out of the houſe, in order to purſue his waggon and horſes, leaving the Iriſhman to laugh at the adventure. The waggoner ſoon returned, and having diſcovered the trick, his countenance was ſufficient to raiſe the moſt riſible ideas of the company, who laughed vociferouſly. "Ben't ye aſheamed to rob a poor fellow of his dinner in theſe hard times," blubbered Joey, "odd rat ye, I wiſh ye had the red-hot poker in your guts, inſtead of my dumpling."

"Thank

"Thank ye, honey," returned the player, "but that might not be ſo eaſily digeſted. Do you love to ſee a play Joey?"

"What if I do?" ſaid the waggoner, with a ſulky accent.

"And have ye a ſweet-heart too, jewel?"

"What, do ye want to put her into your maw?" ſaid Joey.

"No, faith, honey," replied the player, "I would not do the ſweet crater ſuch an injury. Here are two tickets for the play, which will, I think, make you amends for your little bit of ſwines fleſh."

Joey

Joey not only took the tickets, but gave many thanks to the generous gentleman. Barclay could not avoid laughing at the incident: he wondered that the drama ſhould have ſuch an influence with the illiterate. The Iriſhman was very well pleaſed, and joining with his friends at chuck-farthing, ſuffered the grinning waggoner to eat his delicate morſel without interruption."

CHAP. V.

WHILE the company remained in this order, and Barclay was ſitting a quiet ſpectator, a little paltry dreſſed figure entered the kitchen, with a book in his hand. This proved to be the manager, who called the attention of his company from the gaming table, and told them that he had received the laſt new comedy from London, and engaged to have it performed in the courſe of four days.

" It

"It is a command," he cried, "and I muſt not retract; yet, how the devil we are to get it up, I cannot tell. Our company will be incomplete, for Mr. Loftus poſitively leaves me to-day. Lewis has a daſhing character in it; and a damned long one too. Who will take it? Hey! will you—or you—or you?"

"The devil take me if I do," cried the Iriſhman. Every other gentleman, to the mortification of the manager, declined it.

"What's to be done?" he continued; "we ſhall loſe our characters; we ſhall be called vagabonds, and, perhaps, be threatened to beat hemp in bridewell, or to be placed, ſome twenty

twenty or thirty hours, in the pariſh ſtocks, for it is the command of a country juſtice. What's to be done? Hey! Who ſhall I give the character to?"

"Faith give it to Mrs. Falderkin," replied one of the gentlemen, "ſhe makes a deviliſh good rake, and has the beſt memory, for ſuch characters, of any woman in England."

"It cannot be," cried the manager, "there is not a pair of breeches fit for a lady to draw on. She has worn the dove coloured ſattin one's quite bare, and vows ſhe will not come forward in the white pair that I won at all-fours of the recruiting ſerjeant. Hey! what's to be done?"

Barclay

Barclay ſat ſilent ſome few minutes, and found that if he was not ſcrupulous about the ſituations of life, he might be immediately placed in one. Pride reſtrained inclination, and neceſſity rouſed it. A ſtrolling player with a pittance was better than a wandering beggar; and he did not doubt but that, in the four days, he could perſonate the hero of the comedy. He aroſe from his ſeat, and telling the manager that he wiſhed to ſpeak with him, they retired into another room, when Barclay offered his ſervices, and undertook to perform the character. The manager was pleaſed with his perſon and addreſs; and having heard him ſpout two of Hamlet's ſoliloquies, promiſed to give him a ſalary of fifteen ſhillings a week, and four clear benefits in the year.

year. The offer was accepted, and after being hailed as a fellow comedian by the company in the kitchen, he began upon the immediate ſtudy of the comedy. With the Engliſh drama he was very converſant; he had read Shakeſpeare, and almoſt every ſubordinate dramatiſt. His mind was ſtrong and retentive, his judgment good, and his taſte natural.

Spending ſome few hours of the night in reading the character, he found that he had made conſiderable progreſs in it; and when Mr. Tinſel, the manager, expreſſed his fear of having it unlearned, Barclay quieted the little gentleman by running through the three firſt acts. Mr. Tinſel was aſtoniſhed and pleaſed, and Barclay, wiſhing

wiſhing for a little relaxation, went to the Theatre to ſee the rehearſal of the evening's performance. The moſt riſible ideas took poſſeſſion of his mind, when he viewed the decorations of the ſtage. The wardrobe ſeemed ſomewhat ſcanty, but the few dreſſes that were placed in it ſhewed the remains of grandeur: in ſhort, they were as magnificent as tarniſhed lace and Briſtol-ſtone could make them.

The ladies of the theatre ſoon after appeared, and Mr. Tinſel introduced them to Barclay. They were all prodigiouſly polite; they courtſeyed like court-ladies, and ſpoke with faſhionable eaſe, although they ſometimes made a ſmall violation of grammar. Barclay, however, ſeemed to pleaſe

them, and they were evidently desirous to please *him*. One of the ladies was particularly civil; Mr. Tinsel had called her Mrs. Falderkin, by which Barclay discovered that she was the wife of the humourous Irishman. She leered at our hero, and he thought that, when she returned him a book which he had asked to look at, he felt a pressure on his fingers, which *chance* could not possibly have occasioned. Barclay looked in her face, but she withdrew her eyes with diffidence, and affected confusion.

The rehearsal soon after commenced, and never before had Barclay heard such a jargon: the gentlemen began to dispute about accent and modulation, and the ladies to quarrel about delicacy

delicacy and attitude. This led to the expoſition of former incidents, and accuſations of ignorance and ſtupidity were freely preferred. Mr. Tinſel endeavoured to reſtore harmony; but even after Deſdemona had been ſmothered, ſhe jumped ſuddenly up, and abuſed the Moor of Venice for the rough manner in which he had killed her. The drama, however, cloſed more peaceably than Barclay had expected; the jokes and pleaſant ſarcaſms of Mr. Falderkin reſtored harmony and good humour, and even induced Deſdemona to promiſe Othello an unſoiled muſlin apron to convert into a turban.

On the following day the rehearſal of the new comedy was called; and

Barclay's riſibility was again excited by the buſtle and confuſion it occaſioned. He was nearly perfect in his part; but ſcarcely a ſingle perſon in the theatre could, without error, repeat half a dozen ſentences. Mr. Tinſel fretted; the ladies were put into ill humour; and Mr. Falderkin ſwore that he moſt cordially wiſhed the devil had his character. But the ſurpriſe of Barclay was called forth, and his attention particularly rouſed, by a perſon whom he had not ſeen before. This was a young lady who was to perſonate the heroine of the piece, and whoſe exterior was highly intereſting. She was diffident and modeſt, without affectation; her figure was elegant, her face lovely, and her voice harmonious. She ſhewed none of the groſs imperfections

ſections of the other ladies, and had attained a good knowledge of the character that ſhe had to ſupport.

She intereſted, ſhe even charmed our hero: he learned that her name was Feverſham, and that ſhe had been only ſix months in the company. He afterwards endeavoured to obtain an interview with her, and ſucceeded: he was received by her with politeneſs, and every word that ſhe ſpoke came with irreſiſtible force upon the ear of Barclay. Their diſpoſitions were, in ſome degree, congenial: Miſs Feverſham perceived both good ſenſe and breeding in Barclay, and in ſpeaking of the ſituation in which ſhe had engaged, ſhe acknowledged that ſhe had not offered her ſervices to Mr. Tinſel

through inclination. She was not, however, communicative on her affairs, and Barclay withdrew without obtaining the deſired knowledge of this intereſting girl.

The night fixed for the performance of the new play arrived; Mr. Juſtice Addlepate, his fat ſpouſe, and chubby daughters were placed in a conſpicuous part of the houſe; and the landlady of the Inn had lent Mr. Tinſel a bed curtain to decorate his worſhip's box. The fidler (for there was but one) began to play an hornpipe by way of overture; the curtain was drawn up, and our hero, for the firſt time, preſented to the public. Great applauſe was beſtowed upon his ſtile of acting, and he once heard Miſs Arabella Theodoſia

Theodoſia Addlepate tell her mama, that ſhe thought him a monſtrous fine fellow. The play went off ſplendidly, and the loud he, he, of the juſtice, the riſible contortions of Mrs. Addlepate, and the broad grins of Miſs Arabella Theodoſia and her ſiſter, expreſſed their general ſatisfaction.

CHAP. VI.

THE next day Barclay was *téte à téte* with Miſs Feverſham; and having giving her the particulars of his life, ſympathy, or ſomething elſe, induced her to ſpeak of herſelf.

"You have been unfortunate," ſaid ſhe, "and ſomewhat raſh; but I may ſay the ſame of myſelf. Many unpleaſant viciſſitudes have I experienced. My father was a merchant

in

in London; he was a reſpectable man; he was, alſo, an exemplary parent. Misfortunes, ſucceſſive misfortunes, befell him; his loſſes were many; his credit was injured, and bankruptcy ſucceeded. It is now five years ſince that circumſtance: my father conſigned me to the care of his brother, who lived independently in London, and having entreated him to protect me a while, he haſtened to India with the hope of raiſing his fortune. My uncle promiſed to befriend me, 'till the circumſtances of his brother wore a more favourable aſpect, and would, I believe, have ſtrictly fulfilled his charge, had it not been for his wife.

" This woman was of the moſt unamiable and ſingular temper; ſhe had brought

brought a conſiderable fortune with her, as *ſhe* ſaid (although it did not amount to a thouſand pounds) and could boaſt of being the daughter of a Baronet. I ſoon felt the force of poverty; Mrs. Feverſham, not unfrequently, reminded me of my ſituation, and moſt uncharitably endeavoured to ſuppreſs the hope that I entertained of my father ſeeing better days. It was ſome conſiderable time before I received a letter from my exiled parent; at length, however, I was rendered happy by being aſſured of his ſafety; but of his circumſtances he was almoſt ſilent, which made me apprehenſive that they had not yet begun to flouriſh. This was the only letter I ever received from him; but I have many reaſons to ſuppoſe that our correſpon-

dence

dence was fruſtrated by my imperious aunt; for, whether in affluence or poverty, I was aſſured that my father would not abandon me. The acrimonious temper of this woman grew inſufferable; ſhe abuſed with groſſneſs, even when I uſed every effort to pleaſe her, and at length I retorted with aſperity.

" My heart was wounded, but my ſpirit was not broken; my uncle was a cypher, a puppet guided by the mechaniſm of his wife, who deſired me to collect my *rags*, and to go in queſt of fortune. Nearly five years had I borne the ill uſage of Mrs. Feverſham, when I received this intimation. I accuſed her with inhumanity, and told her that I would ſeek my

father in India; when she began to laugh with irony, and informed me that she had recently received a letter, which might direct me to him. She, very deliberately, took a letter from her pocket, and put it into my hand. I unfolded it with eagerness, but, ah! I found that he was a prisoner of the French. My heart sunk with terror; I, however, quitted my inhuman aunt, and found myself an unfriended wanderer, with the sum of twenty pounds, which I had cautiously saved. I had no acquaintance; no one person had *lately* professed a friendship to me; application would, therefore, have been vain, even had I been inclined to make it. But I suffered not so much for myself as I did for my poor father;

father; his uncertain fate filled me with terror.

"I haſtened from London, and took my reſidence in a diſtant village, where I opened a ſmall ſchool, but without ſucceſs. Affliction attended me for a conſiderable time; my health was impaired and my purſe nearly emptied. Somewhat reſtored, I abandoned my project, and, after deliberation, humbled my mind to ſervitude.

"But where was I to obtain a ſituation? Who would receive me without a recommendation, and to whom could I poſſibly apply for one? Theſe were my truly unpleaſant reflections, as I journied towards the neareſt market-town. Paſſing through a village

a village I met with Mr. Tinſel, who ſoon diſcovered his profeſſion to me; and finding that I had ſome acquaintance with the drama, he wiſhed me to attempt a character. Diſtreſs will humble our ideas; it levelled mine to an acquieſcence to the propoſal. I made the experiment, and acquitted myſelf ſo well to the ſatisfaction of Mr. Tinſel, that he offered me terms, which, to one ſo poor, appeared advantageous, and which I accordingly accepted.

"Ah! Mr. Barclay, you cannot conceive what I have ſuffered. I have been compelled to pour forth feigned ſorrows, when my own, occaſioned by the ſhocking fate of my unprotected

unprotected parent, have riſen infinitely above them."

Here Miſs Feverſham ceaſed: tears ſtarted into her eyes, and Barclay felt a ſenſation which was not of the moſt pleaſant nature. He pitied Emily, and entreated her to hope that heaven had vouchſafed to ſupport her father, amidſt the horrors of captivity and oppreſſion. When he returned to the Inn, he found his fellow players making large libations to Bacchus, although the ſcanty ſtate of their pockets obliged them to ſubſtitute porter for port. Anacreontic mirth and pleaſantry enlivened the whole circle, and made the country bumkins gaze with inexpreſſible wonder. Barclay was compelled to mingle with them, but Mr. Falder-

kin

kin being inclined to favour the company with an Iriſh ſong, our hero contrived to withdraw to his chamber, without attracting their particular notice. He took up a book, but was not much inclined to read; Miſs Feverſham had engroſſed all his thoughts, and her lovely countenance ſeemed always before his eyes.

He was not long ſuffered to enjoy his ideas without diſturbance, for Mrs. Falderkin appeared at the door, and without ceremony came into the chamber, and placed herſelf beſide him. She apparently forgot that ſhe was a married lady; that Barclay was a bachelor, and that ſhe was breaking through the rules of decorum, by making

making herſelf ſo eaſy in a bed-chamber.

"Ah! my dear fellow," ſhe cried, tenderly taking his hand, and raiſing her eyes to his face, "how much more amiable than my huſband are you in my eyes."

This ingenuous confeſſion abſolutely ſtartled Barclay, who could not poſſibly conceive but that ſhe was amuſing herſelf.

"By heaven," continued Mrs. Falderkin, "I love you more than any other man on earth. Yes, I confeſs it, and glory in my paſſion! Can you—can you be inſenſible?"

"Inſenſible! of what, Madam?" cried Barclay, with aſtoniſhment.

"Of what!" ſaid Mrs. Falderkin, with a ſmile—"Of my love! of my warm and ardent affection! away with all reſtraint, all ridiculous ſentiments; I am wedded to a devil, and fain would gain the love of an angel."

At the concluſion of this glowing ſpeech, the arm of Mrs. Falderkin was thrown over his ſhoulder, and one of her hands was careleſſly placed upon his knee. He was all tumult, and the lady all love. Powerful emotions aroſe within his breaſt, but they were, for a while, partly ſuppreſt by honour. He had a ſufficient ſhare of ſuſceptibility, and the object before him rouſed

ſenſations

ſenſations which were conquered with difficulty. Mrs. Falderkin was really an handſome brunette, with black ſparkling eyes, which were now, through peculiar circumſtances, lighted up with additional luſtre. Barclay could not view her unmoved; and ſhe was every moment ſhewing him ſome little favour. His philoſophy was failing apace; honour had almoſt ceaſed to whiſper in his ear, and the blandiſhments of Mrs. Falderkin were not to be repulſed.

The object appeared irreſiſtible; ſhe was wrapped in a looſe *robe de chambre*, and her lovely boſom was but ſlightly covered. All the frailty of Barclay's nature now began to ſhew itſelf, and he would have fallen into

error, had not the voice of Mr. Falderkin, which was not very muſical, rouſed his guilty wife, and made her fly from the careſſes of her inſpired inamarato.

Frown not, reader, at this ſcene: vice ſhould be diſplayed as a contraſt to virtue. Barclay learned from it a leſſon of honour.

CHAP. VII.

MR. Falderkin did not come up the ſtairs, he only ſummoned his wife to attend him below; and never had his voice ſounded more hateful. Rouſed by this fortunate interruption, and waked to reflection, Barclay was happy in finding himſelf untainted by diſhonour; he accuſed himſelf as being unprincipled, and reſolved to avoid the temptation of a tête à tête in future. He afterwards found that the lady was

not at all disconcerted; but he did not think it proper to listen any more either to matrimonial philippics, or professions of unauthorized love.

The company staid but a fortnight longer in the village; when Mr. Tinsel removed them to a small market-town, about ten miles distant. Barclay engaged Miss Feversham for a travelling companion, and shewed her every civility that was in his power. His attachment to her was permanent, and love rose from the source of compassion. Although the fate of her father dwelt within her mind, yet she could not avoid to cast aside her sorrows when Barclay appeared before her. She beheld him not with indifference; she thought herself bound to esteem him,

him, and at length found that he had kindled ſentiments, which were the harbingers of a paſſion of which ſhe had only heard and read.

One evening, as they were ſitting together, ſhe ſpoke of his ſituation, and, with a ſmile, begged him to liſten to a little ſalutary advice. "I think," ſhe ſaid, "that you are wrong in continuing with Mr. Tinſel, for your ſituation is very precarious. You may certainly meet with ſomething that will be more advantageous to you. The paths of life are many; let me, therefore, adviſe you to ſeek one of them, which will lead you to happineſs. In ſhort, as a friend, I wiſh you to abandon the ſtage, and court fortune in

ſome other garb than that of an itinerant actor."

"And this is your advice, Emily?"

"Poſitively, it is."

"And why not apply it to yourſelf, my dear Emily?"

"For this very ſimple reaſon: becauſe it is *not* applicable. In trade, as well as in ſcience, man has an unlimitted range; but the employments for women are more confined, and the few occupations to which their natural talents and abilities are ſuited, are filled with thoſe effeminate beings who live upon the privileges of the weaker ſex. You can brave a thouſand difficulties,

culties, under which I ſhould certainly ſink; you can defend yourſelf by natural power, and ſubſiſt by a thouſand means, which, to me, are totally unknown. Go, ſir, and ſeek better fortune; you have abilities for many capacities. Try the metropolis, and enter into any comfortable ſituation, rather than continue to be a wanderer."

"I thank you for your advice," replied Barclay, "and would try the experiment you propoſe, but ——"

"But what?" interrupted Emily.

"It would be painful to be ſeparated from you," anſwered Barclay; "yes, my dear Emily, I have an honeſt and affectionate regard for you, and

and I ſhould regret the loſs of your ſociety."

This confeſſion both pleaſed and confuſed the perſon to whom it was made; ſhe, however, urged his departure, and expatiated upon the advantages which would probably be derived by his acquieſcence to her requeſt. Barclay muſed a while, and gave the ſubject ſerious thought. "Yes, I will go," he cried, "and endeavour to make myſelf more worthy of your eſteem. Ah! could I but remove *you* from ——"

"I know what you would ſay," interrupted Emily, "but I muſt not think of giving up my profeſſion. It will be pleaſure to me to hear of your welfare

welfare and happineſs; I ſhall not ceaſe to remember you, and I truſt that I ſhall, for a while, live in your memory."

"Live a while in my memory!" cried Barclay; "live *ever* in my *heart*, my dear Emily, whether in ſickneſs or in health, in riches or in poverty!"

Emily prevailed: Barclay promiſed to direct his ſteps towards London (for he was ſtill averſe to return to Williamſon) and endeavour to eſtabliſh himſelf in ſome reputable ſituation. Emily was not a woman of affectation; ſhe did not ſtrive to conceal her ſentiments, and ſhe promiſed to hold a regular correſpondence with him. On the following day Barclay gave Mr. Tinſel

Tinſel an intimation that he ſhould leave the company. The little manager was really concerned, and endeavoured to detain the young actor by making very great offers. He, however, remained unmoved; and aſſured Mr. Tinſel that he was peremptorily fixed on abandoning the ſtage. The players, hearing of his intended departure, not only flocked round him to expreſs their regret, but, likewiſe, engaged him in their company; ſo that it was late in the evening before he could ſteal away from them, in order to go to his Emily.

He found her alone and unemployed; he thought that ſhe looked unwell, and as if ſhe had been weeping; but ſhe endeavoured to aſſume a vivacity, and

and to diſſipate her ſorrows. This *laſt* interview was affecting, becauſe they had never felt their mutual regard ſo ſtrong before. She did not ſcruple to avow her affection for him. She earneſtly prayed for his happineſs, and entreated that he would make enquiries in London reſpecting her captive parent.

The language of parting friends is ſeldom conſolatory: Barclay was tender and impreſſive, and he knew not how to quit his lovely Emily. The clock ſtruck eleven, and ſhe roſe from her chair; Barclay roſe likewiſe and took hold of her hand. "Farewell," he ſaid, "and in every future hour of your life, be aſſured that you will poſſeſs the beſt affections of Charles Barclay.

clay. We ſhall meet again, my Emily, and I truſt in happineſs."

"Heaven grant it!" cried Emily, with fervour.

He preſſed her hand, and placed his lips upon her cheek. The miſtreſs of the houſe coming into the room, all further converſation was prevented, and Barclay was compelled to depart, without ſpeaking again of his love to Emily.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

THE next morning Barclay placed himſelf in a ſtage-coach, and in the enſuing evening, found himſelf in London. Mr. Tinſel had been very liberal to him; his ſalary had been regularly advanced, ſo that, after he had paid his fare, and travelling expences, ten guineas ſtill remained in his pocket. He was a perfect ſtranger to London, having never been there before. He ſpent the night without a

ſingle

ſingle companion, and in the morning ſauntered into the ſtreets.

Having walked about nearly two hours, he entered a coffee-houſe, and began to ſcan the news-papers. He was not, at that time, more eager to learn what was going forward between the warring nations, than to peruſe the advertiſements for valets, femme de chambres, cooks, butlers and lawyers clerks; although he had too much pride to engage in any menial ſituation. But while he was turning over the papers, and caſting an oblique glance at the company preſent, his general attention was withdrawn, and fixed upon a couple of oddities, who were ſitting in an adjoining box, and whoſe appearance almoſt raiſed his laughter.

One

One of them was a little man, whoſe body was of that accommodating ſize which is vulgarly called weazel-bellied; his face was long and thin, and his habit was apparently cut by a taylor who lived in the laſt century. His companion was of the ſame dimenſions; but a prominent noſe, and a long peaked beard were ſufficient to ſhew that he was of the tribe of Levi.—"Alack, alack! Mr. Solomans," cried the Chriſtian, "I forgot to tell you of my loſs, my irreparable loſs!"

"Loſh!" exclaimed the little Jew, "vat you mean, Mr. Diver; you no means your monies?"

"No, I mean my clerk, Dick Watling," replied Mr. Diver; "the

poor lad was carried off laſt night, and Doctor Cormorant had the impudence to ſay that it was owing to the want of nutritious food, although a baſon of barley-broth was placed by his bed-ſide, when he was firſt taken ill, and ſtood there 'till he died."

"Oh, dat be ſcandalous," cried Soloman, "dat be defamaſhion! barley-broth iſh very good, very good indeed!"

"Aye, to be ſure it is, friend Solomans; after Dick was dead, I got Tabitha to warm it again in a pipkin, and, though it had been made five days, I never ſwallowed a more delicate ſpoonful in my life. Died for want of nutritious food indeed! why,

I loved

I loved the lad ſo well, that if five guineas would have ſaved his life, I do think I ſhould have given them."

"Take care of your monies," cried Mr. Soloman; "better to loſe Dick dan five guineas."

"Oh, no, no!" cried Mr. Diver; "Dick was a child faſhioned after my own heart. I brought him up from a tit-mouſe, and made him perfect in his buſineſs before he was ten years old. Oh, he was the lad for buſineſs! why, if he heard good or bad news, that had not widely circulated, at the diſtance of two miles, he would run like a grey-hound, and venture breaking a blood-veſſel, in order that I might be the firſt on change."

Theſe gentlemen ſoon after quitted the room, and left Barclay to form his opinion of their different characters. He found that they were both of the ſtock-jobbing fraternity, and was half tempted to apply to Mr. Diver for the vacant ſituation of Dick Watling. It was true, that he was not converſant in the trade, nor did the parſimony of Mr. Diver much pleaſe him; yet he could not expect to riſe into the favour of fortune, only by gradations, and if the employment did not prove very lucrative, he might, by engaging in it, obtain much uſeful knowledge and information. The next day he again placed himſelf in the coffee-room, in the hope of ſeeing the Jew's friend, who ſoon after appeared, and luckily alone. Barclay, for a few minutes, was

was undetermined whether he ſhould make the application or not; he, however, advanced towards the little ſhrivelled uſurer, and, without circumlocution, explained his buſineſs to him.

Mr. Diver was, fortunately, pleaſed with his phyſiognomy, and, after ſome further converſation, agreed that he ſhould reſide in his family for a month, after which, if there was a mutual ſatisfaction, he would engage him for a year; but, if he did not approve him, he would give him a guinea for his ſervices, and his board and lodging gratis. To this propoſal Barclay acquieſced, and he was ſoon after conducted to Mr. Diver's houſe, which ſtood in a little dirty alley in the city.

His laughter could ſcarcely be reſtrained when he entered the houſe where he found an half-ſtarved rough-headed boy, twirling round a ſmall piece of beef that hung on a ſtring before the fire, which could be ſcarcely ſaid to burn, although the maſter of the houſe applied his cane to the back of the poor little devil, for waſting too many coals.

Two females, and the before-mentioned domeſtic, compoſed the houſehold of the uſurer; one of them was Miſs Tabitha Diver, his niece, a maiden lady of the age of thirty-five, and the other a raw country wench, who did the drudgery of the houſe.

Miſs

Miſs Tabitha was in better plight than her uncle, and wanting ſome inches of five feet in height, ſhe appeared to be a luſty woman. She had not, at this time, any pretenſions whatever to beauty or comelineſs; her face was broad, her noſe flat, and the ſmall-pox had made terrible havoc with her countenance. She was dreſt in a ſtiff brocade, which had apparently been ſcoured a dozen times, and had as many greaſy ſpots as flowers. She wore a lace head-dreſs, trimmed with a faded ſcarlet ribbon; her neck was adorned with a ſtring of amber beads; her ears were decked with garnet pendants, and her ſhort fat fingers ornamented with rings of many an hue.

She

She received Barclay with much civility, and ſome affectation; and being informed that he was to be an inmate, ſhe heartily welcomed him, giving, at the ſame time, a ſigh to the memory of poor Dick Watling. It was ſomewhat of the nature of an heigh-ho; Mr. Diver reſponded, Dolly grinned, and the boy, who had the charge of the dinner, was obliged to ſtuff his fingers into his mouth, to prevent himſelf from laughing aloud; which being obſerved by Miſs Tabitha, ſhe laid her broad fat hand with ſome conſiderable force upon his cheek, while her uncle vowed that he ſhould faſt 'till the next day for his impertinence.

Barclay

Barclay almoſt wiſhed himſelf out of the houſe, and pride was beginning to be very buſy with him. The oddities of the family however afforded him diverſion, and he reſolved to ſtudy their characters for ſome ſhort time. The dinner was ſerved up about one o'clock, and Miſs Tabitha, though not with much grace, did the honours of the table. The piece of beef only was brought forward, and that was of an ordinary quality. When the cloth was removed, the deſert was placed upon the table, which conſiſted of half a dozen decayed pippins; and a bottle of raiſin wine, made by the fair hands of the lovely Miſs Tabitha, was produced at the ſame time.

Mr.

Mr. Diver did not employ Barclay for the remainder of the day, but informed him that he ſhould find buſineſs for him on the morrow. He, however, began to initiate Barclay into the myſteries of his profeſſion, and informed him that *any* perſon, giving ſufficient ſecurity, and paying after the rate of thirty per cent. might be by him accommodated with *any* ſum of money. He likewiſe told him that he was in partnerſhip with a pawnbroker in the city, and that it would be part of Barclay's buſineſs to ſettle the accounts in that quarter, with the other members of the firm. Barclay involuntarily ſtartled on hearing this. Pride again revolted within his breaſt; but he cruſhed it before it had riſen to any conſiderable power. Emily,

his

his dear Emily, had ſaid that the paths of life were many, and if he did not continue to like that in which he was treading, it was eaſy to turn out of it.

Mr. Diver aroſe about an hour after dinner, and having expatiated upon the luxuries of the day, informed his dear niece, Tabitha, that he ſhould ſpend the night at Iſlington, and not return to town 'till the next morning. Having ſaid this, Miſs Diver tied an handkerchief around his neck, to prevent him from taking cold, and accompanied him to the door. After his departure, ſhe returned again to Barclay, and told him that it was a very uſual thing for her uncle to ſleep at Iſlington; and that he frequently ſpent three

nights of the week with an old uſurious friend there.

"But pigs ſhould aſſociate with pigs," continued Miſs Tabitha, "and never am I ſo truly happy as when I ſee the old wretch's back turned towards the door. I am obliged to coax and wheedle him before his face, but I have as much affection for my cat as I have for him."

Barclay was aſtoniſhed by this aſſertion; for Miſs Tabitha had ſhewn ſuch an abundance of affection, love and duty to her uncle, that he concluded ſhe was, like poor Dick Watling, a child faſhioned after his own heart.

"Ah!"

"Ah!" cried Miſs Diver, with a languiſhing ſmile, "what a pity it is that ſuch a fine and charming fellow as you are, ſhould have any connections with this old deſpicable badger. Why, he would ſtarve you, if he had his will, and afterwards ſell you to a Surgeon for diſſection, if he could make five ſhillings of your body. I am compelled to be his ſlave; ſtill there are ſome few moments when I can be my own miſtreſs; when the old porcupine is from home I am free. Hey! Dolly! Peter!"

This ſummons was made with a voice neither ſoft, nor feminine, and the two ruſtics came running immediately into the room, to know her commands.

"Run

"Run to the King's-Arms," ſaid Miſs Diver, "and bring four bottles of port, and a pint of brandy; and, harkye; do you hear, tell the landlord that it muſt be genuine coniac, and none of that adulterated ſlop that he ſent me when your maſter went laſt to Iſlington."

Peter, as ſoon as he had received her commands, ſkipped out of the room, having firſt been deſired to remove the raiſin wine, and drink confuſion to all miſers.

"And do you, Doll," continued the lady, "go to the poulterer's, and buy a couple of fowls; then go to Mr. Chignon's, and tell him to come and dreſs my hair at five o'clock. And

go,

go, afterwards, and beſpeak a fiddle; and preſent my compliments to Miſs Daſh, Mrs. Sarſenet, and Mr. Tipkin, and invite them to ſup and take an hop with me. Fly! be briſk! O, I am impatient to hear the ſound of the fiddle!"

Barclay was aſtoniſhed: he could ſcarcely believe her to be the ſame woman who had ſo ſparingly carved at dinner, and agreed to all that the old uſurer advanced reſpecting œconomy.

"Ha! ha! ha! vociferated Miſs Diver; how you ſtare! what! did you really ſuppoſe me the monſter I appeared to be, and that I was pleaſed with ſitting at the old niggard's table, dreſſed like a queen in a puppet-ſhew? No!

No! I am a different creature, I aſſure you. I love life, though I can but ſeldom enjoy it."

Peter returned with the wine, and ſhe inſiſted upon Barclay's waſhing down his four raiſin with port; ſhe, at the ſame time, recommended a bumper of brandy, which, however, he declined. But ſhe was not diſpoſed to return it to the bottle; ſhe, therefore, applied the glaſs to her ſweet lips, and completely drained it. After this ſhe grew very loquacious, and frequently an amorous ſentiment would force it's way. She reviled, moſt bitterly, againſt her uncle, and gave ſome intimations to Barclay of his proceedings, which ſeemed to border upon villany.

Taking

Taking glaſs for glaſs, the bottle of port was at length emptied, when Miſs Tabitha roſe briſkly from her ſeat, and begged her companion to diſpenſe awhile with her attendance, in order that ſhe might retire, and make ſome ſmall preparations for the evening's rout.

CHAP. IX.

BARCLAY could ſcarcely refrain from laughing at her whimſicality, though, in ſtrict juſtice, he thought that he ought not to connive at her clandeſtine proceedings. The wine, however, had exhilerated his ſpirits, and he reſolved to accept the invitation of joining the party at night. He began to think of his dear Emily, and likewiſe to wiſh that he had not left her. He entertained no great hopes of his preſent

ſent ſituation proving either comfortable or lucrative: and although he had not ſeen any of his employer's tranſactions, he feared, from Miſs Tabitha's report, that they were, in general, ſuch as he could not, with any ſentiment of honour, or of humanity, engage in.

He began to tax himſelf with want of ſpirit, for making the application to the old uſurer. He ſhould have raiſed his ideas higher. He ſhould have made himſelf worthy of the ſupport of the great and reſpectable, and not have ſlunk into a pitiful alley, to ſettle accounts with pawnbrokers, and be ſubſervient to the arts of an old deſpicable money lender.

Theſe reflections were growing troubleſome to him, when the door was opened, and Miſs Tabitha entered, and cauſed Barclay ſome further aſtoniſhment.

She had laid aſide her flowered brocade, and attired herſelf in an elegant muſlin robe; her old lace cap had, likewiſe, been put away; a ſtupendous white feather waved over her lovely head, and Mr. Chignon had dreſſed her hair after the faſhion that had been adopted that very day, by a lady of the firſt quality.

"Well! here I am, my Trojan!" ſhe exclaimed, giving him a ſmart ſtroke on the back; no longer the miſer's counterpart, but blithe, merry, and

and eager for mirth and pleaſure. My friends will be here by eight, and the fidler will be in readineſs. Ah! old gripe will ſleep never the worſe for our merriment."

"But are you not apprehenſive that he ſhould, by ſome means, diſcover theſe proceedings?" enquired Barclay.

"O, not at all, my dear," replied Miſs Tabitha; "he is as ſnug as a flea in a blanket; and if either Dolly or Peter was to drop a word, by jingo I would cut off both their ears."

"But what if he ſhould, unexpectedly, return?"

"He dare not venture into the night air; it would play the very devil with his aſthma. Beſides, we ſhall be in the back part of the houſe, where no diſcovery can be made. Make your heart merry then, my dear fellow; I am always merry myſelf, when I am not obliged to be hypocritical. Come, here's to our better acquaintance, and confuſion to all miſers!"

Peter ſtood grinning at her ſide, and having heard the laſt words, he burſt into a loud fit of laughter. "Lord, Miſs Tabitha," cried the boy, "you never drinks but you always ſpeaks them there words, and then—ha! ha! ha!—then you ſays as how they be a toaſt."

"And

"And what is that to you?" ſaid Miſs Tabitha; "What is that to you, you ſnub-noſed puppy? Get out, you dirty cur, and make yourſelf fit to wait upon the ladies that are coming."

At the hour of eight, the friends of Miſs Diver arrived; there were three ladies, and the ſame number of gentlemen. They were all extravagantly dreſſed, and ſtrove to appear well-bred and very polite. Miſs Diver welcomed them with great warmth, and introduced them, with much extravagant ceremony, to Barclay, who was compelled to be civil to them, though he diſcovered that he ſhould derive little advantage from the aſſociation. They bore their reſpective qualities and employments in their looks; it was evi-

dent that four out of the six were of the order of the thimble; and of the profeſſion of the others, Barclay wiſhed not to be informed. Miſs Tabitha was all life and animation, and ſoon ſummoned the Orpheus of the evening, when dancing immediately commenced, and the lady of the houſe compelled Barclay to be her partner.

Wit and hilarity were diſplayed by all the viſitors; and becauſe they wanted another couple, to complete a particular figure, Dolly and Peter were called forward, by Miſs Tabitha, to diſplay their graces. Every thing was conducted with an affectation of etiquette, 'till they had taken their ſuppers; when port and coniac flew about ſo plentifully, that they began to grow very

very obſtreperous. The gallantries of the gentlemen were peculiar, and the ladies reſiſted them with ſcreams, but not ſcreams of terror.

Miſs Diver was very loud and noiſy, and neither frigid in her manners, nor ſentimental in her expreſſions. She was continually repairing to the ſide-board; and at length ſhe could not come from it without deviating from the ſtrait line. They, however, began to dance again with avidity; but, within a quarter of an hour, all was chaos to Miſs Tabitha; ſhe loſt time; the figure was too intricate; heat, or ſomething ſtill more powerful, over-came her, and ſoon after, attempting to turn an angle in right and left, ſhe fell

fell upon the floor, and rolled upon her back.

All the company flew to her aſſiſtance, and the ladies were extremely concerned that her exertions and the heat ſhould have ſuch a ſhocking effect. Dolly was deſired to throw ſome water over her, but this did not reſtore her; her tongue laid half way out of her mouth; her lovely boſom was uncovered; and ſhe frequently cried out, "Play up you dirty dog," which was addreſſed to the fidler, and made the ſorrowing ladies conclude that ſhe was delirious.

The ludicrous ſcenes of the evening afforded Barclay ſome little entertainment. Miſs Diver continued her ravings,

ravings, 'till Miſs Daſh declared ſhe ſhould die with terror; but Peter deſired her not to be frighted, aſſuring her that his miſtreſs had her fits and vagaries every time her uncle went to Iſlington. Order was not to be reſtored; the company went away, and Miſs Tabitha was conveyed to bed by Dolly and Peter. Barclay retired to his chamber, not more amuſed than diſguſted. His thoughts wandered to his ſweet Emily, and he ſent many a prayer to heaven for her peace before he cloſed his eyes.

In the morning Mr. Diver returned; every thing was again placed in a miſerly ſtate, and Miſs Tabitha, dreſſed in her brocade, and lace cap, gave her dear uncle a kind and overſtrained reception.

reception. After a breakfaſt of common bohea and mutton broth, the uſurer took our hero into his ſtudy, and having inſtructed him in filling up two or three bonds for large ſums of money, told him that he muſt aſſiſt him in plucking a pigeon. This was unintelligible to Barclay, and he enquired the meaning of Mr. Diver, who told him that a young extravagant Baronet was coming to him within two hours, for a large ſum of money.

"He wants it, bad enough," continued the uſurer, "and if he has it, it ſhall be upon my own terms. Hey! do you underſtand me? Do you take my meaning?"

"Not

"Not clearly, ſir," replied Barclay.

"Why, 'tis as this; I ſhall tell him that I cannot advance it, unleſs I firſt borrow it of you."

"Of *me!*" exclaimed Barclay, "What is your motive for that, pray?"

"Why intereſt, you ninny; egad he ſhall pay pretty dear for his bargain. O, I ſhall have a rare prize!"

Mr. Diver's eyes ſparkled with avarice, and he deſired Barclay to follow him to his chamber. Here he produced an old ſuit of cut velvet and a white wig, with which he deſired Barclay to dreſs himſelf, in order to perſonate

nate the money lender. To this, Barclay at firſt objected; but wiſhing to ſee the extent of his employer's villany, he at length complied, and equiped himſelf with his pantomine dreſs accordingly.

At one o'clock the ſtranger arrived, and Barclay was hurried into a cloſet, having previouſly received inſtructions from the rapacious old uſurer. The money borrower was an handſome, gay young man, who told Mr. Diver that he muſt poſitively accommodate him with five thouſand pounds. The uſurer ſtarted, ſhook his head, and declared that he had not ſo many hundreds at that time unemployed.

The

The Baronet raved, and ſwore that he muſt have four thouſand, at leaſt; but Mr. Diver ſtill perſiſted in his inability. He, however, acknowledged that he had a monied man in his houſe, but his terms might be too high; yet, if that was not an *object* to the Baronet, he might certainly obtain a ſupply. The face of the young man was again enlivened, and he deſired that his friend might be introduced to him; Mr. Diver therefore retired, and afterwards brought Barclay forward, habited in his cut velvet and white wig.

The terms were demanded, and replied to, in a ſtrange voice, by Barclay, who ſaid that he would advance four thouſand pounds, if the borrower bound himſelf for the payment of five thou-

ſand within ſix months. This was agreed to by the diſſipated Baronet, who deſired that the bond might be placed before him. This Mr. Diver did in a minute, and the Baronet was going to ſign it, when the ſoul of Barclay ſwelled with pride and indignation, and he tore the bond in pieces.

"Thus I prevent you, ſir," he cried, throwing aſide his wig, "from being the dupe of a deſigning and rapacious uſurer. What he has told you is a vile fabrication; he would have made me inſtrumental to his baſe deſigns, but, thank heaven! I am not vitiated enough for his purpoſe."

Diver ſtood detected, confounded, and abaſhed. The words of Barclay gained

gained the attention, as well as belief of the Baronet, who, with ſome degree of violence, tweaked the noſe of the money lender, and applied his foot, pretty forcibly, to that part of the human frame, which is ſeldom expoſed to violence, after the alphabet has been learned.

Barclay immediately withdrew, and having equipt himſelf with his own clothes, quitted the houſe without further ceremony, and without bidding the lovely Miſs Tabitha adieu. He was again a wanderer. Fortune was again to be wooed; but he reſolved to engage with no more money lenders. If, after making the experiment, he could find no agreeable ſituation, he could again fly to his Emily,

and be happy in ſpending his days with her. He could gain no intelligence of her father, nor could he ſcarcely harbour an hope of his being living, or of his ſafety, for the enemy were fighting with unrivalled valour and intrepidity, and the yellow fever was depriving thouſands of their breath.

He, however, wrote to Emily, and all his words flowed from the united ſources of love and compaſſion. He entreated the dear girl to ſuſtain her misfortunes with fortitude, and to write to him as ſoon after the receipt of his letter as ſhe poſſibly could. Barclay ſpent four days in looking out for ſome reſpectable and agreeable employment; but he found that a man, willing to be active and induſtrious, might ſtarve

even

even in London. He began to ſuſ-ſpect that the world was not quite ſo good as it ſhould be, and was inclined to view it with ill humour accordingly.

But he received a letter from his Emily, which acted as a charm, and diſſipated all his accumulating ſpleen. The concluſion of the epiſtle cauſed his heart to ſpring with rapture.

"You aſk me," ſhe ſaid, "whether I have ceaſed to forget you? Ah, what an opinion you muſt have formed of female friendſhip! you think, I preſume, that there is no ſuch a thing, and that it is to be found only in thoſe ladies who are drawn, with ſo much ſkill, by our modern novelliſts. This opinion, ſir, is erroneous; and were

you to entertain it, I ſhould certainly decline your correſpondence. But what I am going to ſay, will, I hope, remove it beyond doubt: I certainly have a friendſhip for you, and am pleaſed to avow it. I remember your many little kindneſſes. I have, to keep you in my memory, endeavoured to ſketch your likeneſs, and I think it is the happiest effort of my pencil. I frequently look at it, and ſometimes fancy —— but come, come, I truſt I have ſaid enough on the ſubject; do not, therefore, doubt the ſincerity of *my* friendſhip. Ah, Barclay! could I but hear of my poor father. Whenever I ſee a news-paper, I ſnatch it up with eagerneſs, only to lay it down with diſappointment. The Engliſh are mild and merciful to their captive enemies;

enemies; and why ſhould not the French be the ſame? I frequently, nay, almoſt every hour, aſk myſelf that queſtion, becauſe I want to gain a conviction of the humanity of thoſe people. If my unhappy parent be alive, I beſeech heaven to protect him. God bleſs you, my good friend! the time may probably come, when we ſhall meet again. I remember our parting words; they are familiar to me; and it always gives me pleaſure to repeat them. Shall I omit now?—I will not be ſcrupulous—"*Live ever in my heart, my dear Emily, whether in ſickneſs, or in health, in riches or in poverty.*"—thoſe are the very words.—I will change the form of them.—Live ever in my heart, *my dear Barclay*, whether in ſickneſs, or in health, in riches, or in poverty."

CHAP. X.

HAD it not been for the letter of his charming Emily, the ſpirits of Barclay had probably failed; but thinking himſelf poſſeſſed of her love, he little heeded the neglect of fortune. A fortnight went over, and he had not met with any ſituation; he, however, had made ſome few enquiries in that reſpect, and endeavoured to improve his circumſtances. He could not refrain from taſting ſome of the pleaſures of

of the town; he viſited the park, the gardens, and particularly the little theatre.

He learned that the uncle of his mother had been dead ſeveral years; and that all his fortune had been left to a diſtant relation, who had been intoxicated with proſperity, turned to diſſipation, and died in indigence.

Barclay was tired with city connections, and he wiſhed to ſee the people in the weſt end of the town. Although his purſe was ebbing, it affected not that elevation of the mind, which is frequently, though erroneouſly, termed pride. Three guineas, and no more, remained in his purſe; ſtill he continued to think himſelf a gentleman.

With this inclination he repaired to ſeveral places of faſhionable rendezvous, and made many comments on the people of ton whom he found there.

Sitting one morning in a coffee-room, in the vicinity of Saint James, he obſerved the Baronet whom Mr. Diver had attempted to defraud, and was ſomewhat ſurpriſed, though not abaſhed, to be ſaluted by this gentleman, who immediately recollected his face: He requeſted Barclay to withdraw to a private room, and give him ſome particulars reſpecting the uſurer's tranſactions and deſigns. This was readily complied to by our hero, who, in order to exculpate himſelf, thought it proper to ſubjoin part of his own

ſtory

ſtory to the account of the villanies of his employer.

The Baronet heard him with attention, and was ſo well pleaſed with his ſincerity, that he expreſſed a wiſh to ſerve him. "I like your ingenuous manners," he cried, "and am intereſted by your ſtory. If you will meet me here tomorrow, at two, I will endeavour to obtain you ſome advantage. At preſent, an engagement claims my attention; good morning to you; be punctual to your appointment."

Sir James immediately withdrew, and left our hero filled with wonder and delight. To attract the notice, and gain the patronage of a man of faſhion, was above every hope that he had

had entertained; and though the honourable Mr. Falkenham had deceived him with great promiſes, he did not doubt the veracity of this gentleman. On the following day he was at the coffee-houſe, a full hour previous to the appointment; he looked eagerly for the Baronet, who at length arrived, and received him with well-bred familiarity.

"I am very much pleaſed with your phyſiognomy," cried Sir James Felſham; "I have read Lavater, ſir, and judge by your countenance, that you poſſeſs honeſty, virtue, and good humour."

Barclay bowed with politeneſs.

"And

"And I likewiſe believe," continued the Baronet, "that you poſſeſs natural abilities and good ſenſe. I am not one of thoſe men who deem every perſon, under ſingular circumſtances, as deſerving of ſuſpicion. In ſhort, ſir, I think you have merit; and I wiſh to ſerve you. My uncle, Mr. Seldon, wants a perſon to act as an amanuenſis, and if you have inclination to accept the ſituation, and patience ſufficient to attend to a warm ſenator, a book-mad old woman, and a rhyming miſs, I doubt not but you will find it unexceptionable."

Barclay accepted the offer with gratitude; and expreſſed his acknowledgments to Sir James, for the trouble that he had occaſioned himſelf. The

next day he was conducted by the Baronet to the house of Mr. Seldon, and introduced to that gentleman, and to Lady Mary Seldon and her daughter. Barclay found that he was to be treated as an equal in the family, which was well suited to the independance of his spirit; and he received great pleasure on being informed, by Lady Mary, that she had formerly known both his parents, of whom he knew so little.

Barclay was so well pleased with the respectability of his situation, that he scarcely wished it to be lucrative; Mr. Seldon, however, intimated that he should be liberal to him, and endeavour to make him comfortable. Mr. Seldon was a senator, and an orator of the second rate in the House of Commons.

Commons. He enjoyed a ſnug ſinecure, and was warm in the intereſt of thoſe who had procured it for him. Lady Mary was a very ſingular woman. She was learned, without judgment, and critical, without taſte. Her general language was a jargon; her caprice prepoſterous; her ſentiments were affectedly bold, and her love of admiration was not to be reſtrained. She frequently ſhut herſelf up in a dark cloſet to meditate, and wrote with great avidity when the moon was at its full; affirming that her brain was, at that time, more prolific, and capable of immenſe and majeſtic conceptions.

Her purſuit ſometimes was the belles-lettres; but her genius was unlimitted;

limited; ſhe was a theological, an ethical, a political, and a polemical writer; and, though ſhe had not hitherto publiſhed any thing, yet her collected manuſcripts would form ſeveral folio volumes, and doubtleſs perpetuate her name, and place her foremoſt in the biography of the learned.

The ſpirit of literature was diffuſed into Miſs Caroline Seldon; who was more affected, and not leſs vain, than Lady Mary. But ſhe only ſerved the muſes, and many a delectable *bouquet* did they allow her to cull from the mountain on which they reſorted. She, likewiſe, wrote beſt at the full of the moon; and her compoſitions frequently drew floods of tears from her

her *own* lovely eyes.—So great was the impulſe of her conceptions!

Barclay ſoon diſcovered the true characters of his patron and the ladies, and could ſcarcely refrain from ſmiling at their reſpective whimſicalities. He likewiſe ſoon found that the oratorical abilities of Mr. Seldon were not above mediocrity, and that he poſſeſſed none of the ſublimity of Demoſthenes, nor eloquence of Cicero, though he profeſſed they were his models. He was a great *projector* of politics, and was continually bringing forward motions, which generally dropt to the ground, and were forgotten. Whenever he intended to move for leave to bring in a new bill, Barclay was previouſly employed to make a fair copy of the

ſpeech

ſpeech that was to be delivered, as introductory to the ſubject and deſign; this he always did from the ſcrawls and ſcratches of Mr. Seldon, which generally were ſo inaccurate, ſo blotted, and eraſed, that the meaning of them was very obſcure, and the characters illegible. Barclay, at firſt, copied them nearly verbatim; but finding they were ſtill greatly deficient, he at length ventured to amend them, and interſperſed a few flowers of rhetoric among them.

This, however, he did with delicacy and caution; but Mr. Seldon, who cared not *how* he gained public notice, was pleaſed with the ingenuity of his amanuenſis, and at length allowed him to form the whole ſpeech from the

notes which he previouſly drew. Mr. Seldon ſoon ſaw the advantages he gained from the efforts of Barclay, and news-paper panegyrics almoſt daily met his eye. Barclay was benefitted by them.—Mr. Seldon was liberal and condeſcending; and not only expreſſed his approbation, but made ſeveral genteel pecuniary acknowledgments. Barclay ſoon gained an aſcendency over him, and was in the full poſſeſſion of his confidence. He attended the Houſe conſtantly, and being an expert ſhort-hand writer, took the debates of the day, when any thing important was diſcuſſed.

But he always obſerved that the rhetoric of Mr. Seldon was contained in one ſpeech, the nature of which he

could eaſily anticipate; and that in a reply to any member he was laconic, and not altogether perſpicuous. Barclay ſmiled ſecretly at this trait, and at the ſame time commended his diffidence. He was frequently delighted by hearing the ſpeech of Mr. Seldon extolled by the members of the ſame ſide of the houſe; he enjoyed the pleaſing idea of lending eloquence to a Britiſh ſenator, and frequently exclaimed, "Ah, could Williamſon ſee me now!"

Though the ſtate of politics claimed much of his attention, yet there were times when he was admitted into the reſpective cloſets of Lady Mary and Miſs Seldon. Theſe ladies had formed a valuable opinion of him; and

when the former admitted him into her retirement, ſhe conferred a favour which ſhe had ſhewn to no one perſon beſide for the term of five years. But the unintelligible jargon of Lady Mary only raiſed the riſibility of Barclay; her phraſe was uncommon, and her general words lengthened to ſuch a number of ſyllables, that her converſation ſeemed nothing more than a comment on the Lexicon.

The philoſophy of her Ladyſhip was not altogether unexceptionable: it was partly of the modern growth, and contained ſome of thoſe ſuperficial axioms which have of late been held forward to the prejudice of ſociety. But Lady Mary was not an Atheiſt; ſtill her theological ſpeculations were

by no means contracted, and ſhe warmly ſupported the doctrine of neceſſity. Barclay was compelled to liſten to her diſſertations, and attend to her hypotheſis; but he had that independence of ſpirit, which would not ſcruple to declare its diſagreement to whatever he deemed erroneous and exceptionable, or to what he believed ſubverſive to religion and morality.

Lady Mary heard his remarks and objections with a fixed complacency, and at the ſame time ſmiled unconcern. Her principles were not to be overturned; the hours of her paſt inquiries and reſearches had been ſpent with care, circumſpection, and well-digeſted knowledge; and ſhe did not doubt that her name and writings

would flouriſh at leaſt for four centuries, after the worms had eaten her groſſer part. Barclay always left her with ſatisfaction, and did not wiſh to deprive her of, or put to flight, any of her valuable ideas.

With Miſs Caroline he was leſs reſerved, for that Lady was all condeſcenſion; and often would ſhe pour into his ear her ſentiments of cob-web texture, and lines of harmonious poetry. She was certainly, of the two, the more agreeable companion; ſhe had none of the rigidity, or ſtrange opinions, of Lady Mary; her heart was the receptacle of every thing that was tender, and her mind the repoſitory of every thing that was fanciful. Her invocations to the muſes were

always attended to, and her excurſive imagination produced the moſt ſublime, and exquiſitely beautiful, poetry.

"Ah!" ſhe exclaimed, as ſhe caſt her eyes mildly upon the face of Barclay—"Ah! how delightful it is to be gifted with a fervid, chaſte, and harmonious intellect! this is my only ſolace, my joy, my pride, my delight; and, O ye powers of ſong, my ambition!—Have you ever written any poetry?"

Barclay ſmiled at the enthuſiaſm of our Sappho, and confeſſed that he had ventured to compoſe a ſonnet or two; when Miſs Caroline, with an exclamation of delight, begged that ſhe might inſtantly ſee them and declared that the

the ſonnet was a ſpecies of poetry which ſhe much approved. Barclay was willing to oblige her, and taking ſome looſe papers from a pocket-book, he gave them to her, when ſhe read aloud the following

SONNET.

To the SICILIAN SEA-BOY.

Ah, happy youth! thine are the hours of joy;
'Tis true thou brav'ſt the inconſtant, treacherous deep,
Yet, if a while the whit'ning ſurge annoy,
Full oft the waves, in gentle motion, ſweep,
And lull thee to ſweet reſt, or grateful ſleep.
When, bending o'er the ſhroud, at midnight's hour,
Thou gazeſt on the ſhores thou lov'ſt to trace,
Nor fear'ſt Charybdis, nor dark Scylla's baſe,
Nor heed'ſt the din, though fiery Etna roar,
No, nor the flames which from her wildly pour.

While, round thy bark, the moon it's influence throws,
Thy boſom's calm as ſummer's cloſing day;
And 'ere thou ſtrive to gain ſweet ſleep's repoſe,
Thou to the Virgin giv'ſt thy evening lay.

SONNET,

On an INFANT.

Criſp'd are thy locks, ſweet innocent! thy cheek
Is roſy red, and joyous are thine eyes,
Which, roving, bright vivacity beſpeak,
While mirth before thy devious footſteps flies.

Thine is the thoughtleſs laugh, the dimpled ſmile,
Which the fond mother can to thee impart;
Oh, from this moment, ne'er may care, nor guile,
Infuſe a ſubtle venom in thy heart.

Joy, ſprightly joy, upon thy youth attend,
And peace make ſmooth thy pilgrimage thro' life;

May

May every man to thee become a friend,
And love ne'er feel the wily barb of ſtrife.

But if thou art ordain'd *my* woes to know,
Thy ſtream of life had better ceaſe to flow.

SONNET.

Awake, my fair! the weſt winds fragrance bring,
And Phœbus now prepares his ſteeds to guide;
The roving ſhepherd boy is heard to ſing,
And the ſweet breezes waft the gentle tide,
While, o'er the waves, full many a bark does glide,
And the dun ſea-fowl dips it's heavy wing.
Awake, my fair! and with thy Edwin rove,
O'er meadows, where the unſpotted lily weeps,
Down the green vallies, where the primroſe peeps,
And thro' the green receſſes of the grove;
Or let us climb the bold romantic ſteeps,
Where wild kids brouſe upon the thyme they love.

Nor

Nor ſweet's the ſcene, nor dear the walk to me,
Unmark'd for beauty, or unſhar'd by thee.

SONNET.

O, Love! thou ſtubborn elf, fantaſtic boy,
I will no longer hail thee as a god,
Tho', by thy means, I've gain'd full many a joy,
Tho' I have felt the influence of thy rod,
Which, girt with roſes lovely as the cheek
Of her who bore thee, bows e'en monarchs down,
And rules, with power deſpotic, the rude clown,
Whoſe eye expreſſes what his tongue can't ſpeak.
Whether, with female zephyrs, in the ſhade,
Thou wert diſporting on a ſummer's eve,
Or, bent on ill deſigns, within the glade
Wert roving, ſome fair ruſtic to deceive,
When firſt thou ſaw'ſt me, is to me unknown,—
Thy envy lives, but all thy joys are flown.

SONNET.

Go back, O memory, to my early days—
The joys of childhood yet impreſs my mind;
For then I rov'd the flow'ry woodland ways,
Hunting the goſſomer, which on the wind
Of ſummer flew; or culling tinted ſweets
To deck the cottage girls; or chanting lays,
Which ſome poor matron taught in moments kind.
My heart, e'en now, with thoughts recurring beats,
And all my ſports infantine riſe again.
Ye hours of youth, which ne'er were fraught with pain,
I mourn your rapid flight, and in retreats
Of wildeſt ſolitude aloud complain.
Joy and content, the faireſt gifts of heaven,
Are from my breaſt by ruthleſs ſorrow driven.

SONNET.

Hail, ye dark woods, and ſolitary vales,
Where ſons of pleaſure ſeldom heed to ſtray,
When care, or anguiſh, my weak heart aſſails,

Amid

Amid your windings I purſue my way,
And mark the fadings of declining day
With *ſome* delight, tho' miſery *prevails*.

O, ye wild ſcenes, congenial to my fate,
No path I need my liſtleſs feet to guide;
I love to wander when the hour is late,
And o'er the paly moon the light clouds glide,
Unmark'd by envy, and unhurt by pride,
Far, far from thoſe who pining grief deride.

If I muſt drain th'embitter'd cup of woe,
My penſive ſtrains in ſolitude ſhall flow.

"Rapturous! extatic!" exclaimed Miſs Caroline; "O, I ſhall reverence you, becauſe you are a poet! Your numbers flow as ſmooth as the Avon; your verſes are as ſweet as the ſong of Philomel, and your metaphors are truly delightful. Ah, I muſt have copies of them!"

Barclay

Barclay bowed at this profuſion of compliments; he aſſured her that he ſet no value on the bagatelles, and that he had written them under different impreſſions, and had never given them any correction. The rapture of the poeteſs did not ſoon ſubſide; and ſhe repeated to Barclay an Elegy, which ſhe had written on the *diſſolution* of a favorite Robin, which ſhe intended ſhortly to publiſh with a collection of poems.

Barclay was all attention, and the lady all pathos and ſenſibility, while, with a ſweetly plaintive voice, ſhe read the following

ELEGY.

ELEGY.

Dim be my eyes with bitter care and woe,
And never let me more in green woods ſtray;
Let tickling tears in rapid torrents flow,
And ſable clouds obſcure the god of day.

Mine is no vulgar loſs—a minſtrel came
And tun'd his ſweet, ſweet pipe unto mine ear;
He met me firſt within the green-wood lane,
And ſung ſo ſweet my wretched ſoul to cheer.

Ah, me! ah, me! ſweet robin of the vale!
When verdant beauties did the green meads ſtrew,
Thou oft haſt told thy mellow plaintive tale,
Then wanton hopp'd, and o'er the daiſies flew.

At evening's hour, when Phœbus kiſs'd the weſt,
And hid his red face in the purple cloud,
I thought myſelf ſo favour'd and ſo bleſt,
To hear thee ſing thy gentle accents loud.

My

My minſtrel ſoon feel ſick, ſoon droop'd and die d—
Why do I live the ſtory to relate?
He was his Anna's only joy and pride,
And Anna ne'er will ceaſe to wail his fate.

Planets of Ethiopian night! why ſhed,
Ye curſed bane—why cruſh my warbler's throat?
Why did ye rank him with the breathleſs dead?
Why raviſh all the muſic of his note!

Where ſhall be found the charm of ſummer's eve,
Now my ſweet warbler warble can no more?
Beneath the yew tree I his loſs will grieve,
And while the moon ſhines bright will ſad deplore.

Though Barclay was burſting with ſecret mirth, he had too much politeneſs to explain his actual ſentiments; and when the poeteſs aſked for his opinion of the elegy, he declared that he

he thought it a very elegant and fine compoſition. Miſs Caroline's vanity was flattered by this exacted opinion, which ſhe thought no more than juſt; and ſhe condeſcended to point out ſome of the leading beauties of the piece. But Barclay told her that was unneceſſary; for he thought every word equally proper, and every line equally harmonious.

Miſs Caroline courtſied again and again at the compliment, and hoped (ſhe did not much *fear* it) that the Reviewers would be as good humoured as our hero, when the volume iſſued from the preſs, and came under their ſcrutiny. She flattered herſelf that the encomiums of Barclay were genuine,

and

and did not ſuppoſe that he thought her Elegy a more ridiculous thing than it's prototype, which he had read, with great pleaſure, when he was four years old, entitled, the Death of Cock-Robin.

CHAP. XI.

THE time of Barclay was ſpent agreeable to his wiſh. Mr. Seldon was attentively polite to him, and never unconſcious of his genuine abilities; he acknowledged him, though a young man, and without any extent of claſſical education, to be ſuperior to himſelf in every thing, particularly in political talent. Barclay had the pleaſure of reſorting to the library of Mr. Seldon, which was valuable and well choſen; every

every leiſure hour he dedicated to reading; and the information that he daily gleaned from his reſearches, was of ſingular advantage to him.

To Sir James Felſham, who frequently dined with Mr. Seldon, Barclay was ever attentive; for he conſidered his obligations to that gentleman to be deſerving of true gratitude. Mr. Seldon was a friend to conviviality, and his affability and good humour made him an agreeable companion. Lady Mary ſeldom ſhewed her face to the family; ſhe frequently declined appearing at the table for the courſe of a month, and in that time diſplayed ſo many whimſicalities, that half the ſervants were afraid of her; for they conceived that ſhe held demoniac corre-

ſpondence, and did not always enjoy the bleſſings of ſanity. Sometimes ſhe would be profoundly ſilent, and at others, when in a declaiming mode, ſhe would make the apartments reſound with the vehemence of her eloquence.

Mr. Seldon, who was not without oddities, ſuffered her to mount her hobby-horſe, whenever ſhe pleaſed, and to canter away without any manner of impediment or interruption. Miſs Caroline was as ſentimental, and as much devoted to the ſervice of the muſes as ever. She had compleated her volume of poems, and had only to fix upon ſome harmonious name to place in the title-page, before ſhe committed them to the preſs; for ſhe aſſured Barclay that ſhe ſhould not

aſſert

aſſert her claim to them, before the public called for the fourth edition. But the fictitious name ſhe made a matter of conſiderable importance. Anna Matilda, Charlotte Maria, Eliza, and the like, were ſomewhat ſtale, and ſhe could not readily conceive what ſhe ſhould call herſelf to gain the notice of the literati.

Barclay ſtill continued, without interruption, to correſpond with his Emily. She, in her letters, aſſured him of her health, and gave him ſuch further aſſurances of her friendſhip and affection, that his heart panted to be near to her. One of her dear epiſtles was worth a folio volume of Miſs Caroline's flowry nonſenſe, and he read it nearly an hundred times before he

conſigned it to his pocket. That ſhe was well he thanked heaven, and that ſhe might continue ſo to be, was his often repeated prayer.

But while he was longing to ſee the dear girl who poſſeſſed his beſt affections, he was made joyful by finding that that bleſſing would ſoon be granted him. A ſpeedy diſſolution of Parliament was talked of, and Mr. Seldon had already begun to make preparations for viſiting his borough. Emily was, at that time, performing there; and had informed him, in a recent letter, that ſhe ſhould be ſtationed there for ſome conſiderable time. Mr. Seldon could not think of parting with one who had been ſo ſerviceable to him, and intimated to Barclay, that he

ſtill

ſtill wiſhed for his company and exertions. This occaſioned our hero no ſmall pleaſure; but he was not half ſo well pleaſed with the patronage of Mr. Seldon, as with the idea of again ſeeing the lovely face of Emily, and of declaring his unalterable ſentiments to her.

The ſenatorial avocations of Mr. Seldon were, at length, rendered null, and he, with Miſs Caroline and Barclay, quitted London, and poſted towards the borough, in order to ſolicit the further ſupport of his conſtituents. They arrived there in high ſpirits; and though there was an oppoſing candidate, yet Mr. Seldon did not doubt his ſucceſs, nor the ſtability of his party.

As ſoon as Barclay could poſſibly break away from Mr. Seldon and Miſs Caroline, he haſtened to his Emily, who was not appriſed of his arrival. Their joy was mutual. Emily expreſſed her happineſs, both by her words and the expreſſion of her countenance; and Barclay poured forth all that his heart had accumulated ſince his departure from her. He fancied that the beauty of Emily had improved during his abſence, and that her intellectual abilities were increaſed. She rejoiced in his preſent good fortune, and laughed at the ludicrous account of his ſituation at the little uſurer's.

"But you were almoſt deſerving of your mortification," ſhe ſaid, with a ſmile, "for your precipitance in introducing

ducing yourſelf to a man, whoſe exterior was ſo unfavourable. I rejoice, however, in your preſent circumſtances, and hope that you will long continue to receive the favours of Mr. Seldon. With him you muſt find yourſelf happy."

"Not perfectly ſo," replied Barclay, "there is ſtill a want that makes happineſs incomplete."

"Indeed! I am ſorry for it. What can it poſſibly be?"

"The conſtant preſence of my Emily, without which, not to ſpeak with bloated affectation, a crown would be a bauble. Ah, Emily! I am not the friend of ſolitary pleaſure; I would have

have every perſon exiſting partake of eaſe and comfort; but *you*, Emily—the language of my country wants ſufficient words to expreſs my wiſhes!"

Emily felt a ſtrange and mingled emotion, and, had ſhe encouraged it, ſhe would have ſoon diſplayed a great ſhare of feminine weakneſs. But ſhe endeavoured to aſſume a vivacity, and to laugh at the declaration; ſhe was not, however, an adept in deception, and while the dimples of affected mirth played around her mouth, the tear of ſenſibility roſe within her eye. Barclay could ſcarcely quit her, and ſhe had to give him many gentle intimations before he departed. Mr. Tinſel met our hero in the ſtreet, and having been previouſly acquainted with his

good fortune, was very obſequious and complimentary. Barclay likewiſe met with ſeveral of the ladies and gentlemen of the company, who treated him with great reſpect, and ſeemed to forget their former familiarity. Mr. Falderkin ſaid that he was happy to ſee him, but his lady, retaining probably a remembrance of paſt incidents, was extremely diffident and reſerved.

Mr. Seldon met with almoſt univerſal encouragement in his canvaſs, and to gain the notice of the borough, he gave balls, dinners, routes, &c. Barclay was always preſent upon theſe occaſions, and ſhared the public notice of Mr. Seldon and Miſs Caroline; but he would have ſacrificed all pleaſure of this kind to have dedicated an hour

to

to his Emily. This quandom wandering partner gained intereſt every day; to be with her was bliſs; to hear her talk was rapture; but abſent from her he was diſcontented, and felt himſelf a ſolitary being. Miſs Caroline Seldon was a conſtant attendant at the theatre; and Barclay had frequently the honour of conducting her thither. But he derived no great pleaſure from the drama, and was almoſt inſenſible of the condeſcenſion of the member's daughter.

To ſee his Emily an object of public admiration, to know that he was compelled by *neceſſity* to diſplay her fine talents and beautiful perſon to the gaze of a country audience, was extremely painful to him. It is true that

ſhe

ſhe always gained applauſe; the ladies patronized her, and the gentlemen ſwore ſhe was a d—d fine girl, and conſtantly directed their glaſſes towards her. But this was more wounding to Barclay than contempt would have been; the liberality of the audience he deemed impertinence, and ſeveral times he felt an inclination to ſpring from the box, and bear her from the ſtage in his arms.

"There is a trait of jealouſy in the love I bear for you," he ſaid to her, one day; "I cannot endure to ſee you the admiration of every coxcomb; yet ſuch you muſt unavoidably be while you continue in this public character. But let me ſuffer no longer: Renounce your

your profeſſion; rely on my honour and affection, and accompany me to London."

"Will propriety allow it?" aſked Emily, with a ſmile; "the world is cenſorious—I have found it harſh, cruel and neglectful."

"But when you become the wife of Barclay, believe me, love, he will ſtrive to make it the reverſe. Happineſs will attend us, my Emily; we ſhall laugh at all paſt cares and afflictions; and love and content will preſide over our manſion."

Emily argued againſt this propoſal, though her heart inclined to it. She repreſented

repreſented his fortune as unſtable, and talked of the incumbrance of an unportioned wife. In ſhort, ſhe refuſed to hear a continuance of the ſubject, and diſmiſſed Barclay without aſſuring him of her acquieſcence.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

AT length the day of conteſt arrived, and all was buſtle and confuſion in the borough. The freemen were allowed to quaff wine as the gods did nectar; every fiſh-woman claimed a ſalute of Mr. Seldon, and every greaſy butcher and tallow-chandler was eager to pay his reſpects to Miſs Caroline, who was ſeated at a window in the market-place, dreſſed with the colours of party, and reflecting on the intereſting

reſting figure that ſhe made. She courtſied to all, moſt condeſcendingly; and declared to Barclay, who was in the room with her, that ſhe was much inclined to addreſs them, and to recite a poem in blank verſe, which ſhe had written the preceding evening. But Barclay was not diſpoſed to let the gaping multitude know the extent of her folly; and therefore told her that, however beautiful the flights of her imagination might be, the muſes certainly had nothing to do with elections. The poeteſs then conſented to remain ſilent, though ſhe aſſured her mentor that the brilliancy of conception, and grandeur of metaphor with which the poem abounded, were ſufficient to raiſe the moſt extatic emotions in the friends and lovers of freedom and

liberty. Barclay admitted that the productions of her pen were never rivalled; but, at the ſame time, he told her that ſhe would gain more attention by nodding and ſmirking at the rabble, than by pouring forth all the *brilliant conceptions* and grand *metaphors* that ever entered into her pericranium.

Mr. Seldon muſt have been inſenſible indeed, had he not expreſſed his obligations to Barclay, whoſe aſſiduity was diſplayed upon every occaſion. He gave patriotic ſentiments to the freemen, and kind glances and tender embraces to the *free-women*; for in a conteſted election, many a fair lady claims her rights, and aſſerts her privileges. He likewiſe diſtributed printed addreſſes and paltry ballads (the productions

productions of his own pen) moſt plentifully; and ſlipt many an half crown into the fair hands of the ladies of the borough, which was termed liberality, not bribery. In ſhort, he was never inactive; he aſſociated with people of all deſcriptions; he took his burgandy with men of faſhion and conſequence at the hotel, and drank grog with the ragged ſons of freedom in every pot-houſe in the borough. He was not, at firſt, much pleaſed with the herd alluded to; but Mr. Seldon had ſet the precedent before him, and he ſoon diſcovered that both great and proud men could *occaſionally* ſtoop to low actions, and follow low purſuits.

Among his many avocations, Barclay did not forget his Emily. He

appeared at her lodgings every morning, and conducted her from the theatre every night, except when he accompanied Miſs Seldon thither, and was compelled to eſcort her home. His paſſion increaſed at every interview, and love and Emily were his chief objects. It was not in her power to prevent the flow of his profeſſions; but ſhe always endeavoured to give the converſation a lively turn; and when ſhe found it impoſſible to avert his ſubject, ſhe would acquieſce only by avowing her friendſhip and her objections to his propoſal. But the refuſal was always ſweetly given; and ſhe never wounded the pride of Barclay, who found that his intereſt was, with her, a valuable conſideration.

When

When the poll was inſpected, it was found that the new candidate was conſiderably deficient in number, and Mr. Seldon was duly elected to repreſent the mob, who ſtood around him, making a noiſe as diſſonant as the brays of an herd of wild aſſes. Mr. Seldon addreſſed them with energy and animation; thanked them for the honour they had done him; and made all thoſe golden, or rather *gilded* promiſes, which gentlemen in ſimilar ſituations generally do make, though they afterwards ſhew their deficiency in either recollection or veracity. The huzzas of the populace rent the air; Mr. Seldon was immediately chaired and carried round the town; while Miſs Caroline ſtood at her window, perfectly inſpired, invoking the

muſes for a ſong of triumph; and her grey eyes (which ſhe called hyacinthian) glanced from

Heaven to earth, from earth to heaven!

When our hero appeared before Mr. Seldon, that gentleman took him by the hand, and having expreſſed many obligations for his aſſiduity, preſented him, with a delicacy that enhanced the gift, a bank note of fifty pounds. Miſs Caroline, likewiſe, was warm in her encomiums, and Mr. Barclay received many very fine things from her truly eloquent and poetic lips. Mr. Seldon intended to continue in the borough another week, at the expiration of which he meant to return to London, and after ſtaying there

there ſome ſhort time, to take Lady Mary with him into Weſtmoreland.

An election is generally ſucceeded by a free-ball, where Lords, Baronets and Ladies, mingle with butchers, taylors and oyſter-wenches; and in the moments of hilarity, forget the dignity of blood, and act upon the ſyſtem of equality. A ball, therefore, was announced by Mr. Seldon, and Miſs Caroline promiſed to open it, though ſhe was fearful that, when ſhe conſidered the nature of the aſſembly, ſhe could not bear the effluvia.

Barclay was not diſpoſed to enter into the ſpirit of the ball; he ſaw Miſs Caroline diſplay a few graces, and then quitted the room, in order to repair to

his

his Emily, who had no engagement that evening. The idea of parting with her had been extremely painful to him for ſeveral days; but as the time limitted by Mr. Seldon was paſſing rapidly away, the thought of ſeparation grew ſtill more inſupportable. Emily received him with pleaſure, and was a little gratified by finding that ſhe was ſo great an object of his regard; but the depreſſion of his ſpirits was evident, and ſhe enquired the occaſion of it.

"Can the cauſe be unknown to you, my ſweet girl," ſaid Barclay, "when we are ſo ſoon to part? Ah! how can I poſſibly be happy, when I am ſo ſoon to be ſeparated from you?"

"And

"And is that the only cauſe of your dejection?" ſaid Emily, with a ſmile; "Come, come, let not your thoughts dwell heavily upon a trifling ſubject; be chearful for the preſent, and hope for happy meetings to come."

"And why may I not hope to improve the preſent meeting? Why may I not term this the epocha of Barclay's bliſs? Do you love me, Emily?"

"O, what a queſtion!" cried Emily, with a laughing countenance; why, a Sultan could not have been more laconic in interrogatory!"

"For heaven's ſake," cried Barclay, "do not ſport with my feelings. I know your vivacity is aſſumed. I am

am convinced that I am not an object of indifference to you, and were I to ſpeak of the emotions of my heart, and to explain it's preſent ſtate, I am ſure you would give me your pity."

"O, you cannot be ſure of that; I might probably be obdurate. But if I do not give you my pity, I will give you ſomething more valuable."

"I ſhall eſteem your gift, Emily."

"I know not that: it is only an antidote for love."

"And what is that, my dear girl? What is the grand ſpecific?"

"Forgetfulneſs,

"Forgetfulneſs, Barclay.—If you fly from me you will, *probably*, forget me; and *if* you forget me, you will *certainly* ceaſe to love."

"Never ſhall I forget either—never ſhall I ceaſe to think of Emily—never ſhall I ceaſe to love her! I do not limit my ſpeech, Emily, and I again ſay *never*; I ſhall always harbour your loved idea in life, and, I believe, that even when I am a leſs material being, I ſhall ſtill bear a remembrance of ——."

"Huſh! huſh, you enthuſiaſt," cried Emily, putting her hand upon his mouth; "do not indulge your fancy with ſuch excurſions; let it be content with groſſer objects, and do

not

not ſuffer it to ſoar beyond mortal conception. But, come, let us talk of paſt incidents."

"Let us talk of love, Emily!"

"Pſhaw! nonſenſe—Barclay, be rational, and dedicate the hour that is coming, merely to friendſhip,"

Emily, during the remainder of the evening, endeavoured to lead the converſation, and to prevent the language of Barclay from becoming too florid; ſtill ſhe did not act with affectation, neither did ſhe attempt to conceal thoſe ſentiments which ſhe had formerly acknowledged. Partly to avert his thoughts, and partly to recall her own to a more intereſting, though leſs

happy ſubject, ſhe began to talk of the captivity of her father, and of the little hope ſhe had of his emancipation. This ſubject rivetted the attention of Barclay, becauſe he ſaw that it was the ſource of diſtreſs to the woman whoſe happineſs he ardently wiſhed to promote. His heart ſuffered with Emily's; his hand removed the tears from her cheek, and his tongue was employed in teaching her to hope for future hours of tranquillity, and years of bliſs. After ſtaying with her ſomewhat more than two hours, he returned to the ball-room, which was now a perfect ſcene of tumult and confuſion.

He found Miſs Caroline ſitting, with great dignity, at the upper end of the room; and had ſcarcely paid her

her his compliments, when ſhe requeſted him to conduct her home. Arrived at her lodgings, ſhe began to make many grievous complaints reſpecting the ball; the company was ſo very vulgar, and the heat ſo diſguſting, that ſhe would have given twenty guineas to have been fanned with the *ſilken wing of a zephyr*. Barclay was obliged to attend, for awhile, to her truly ridiculous complaints, which were made in alluring phraſes; but he was very glad when ſhe rang for her woman to light her to her chamber.

Not deſirous of mixing again with the feſtive crowd, Barclay followed the example of the lady; but he retired to think of his Emily, and not to crave the influence of ſleep. Our thoughts

are

are not always pleaſant, though they be fixed upon the perſon whom moſt we love. Barclay's certainty were not of this nature: he recalled the attractions of his Emily, and ſighed at the probability of his ſeparation. He pondered, he reflected, he formed many reſolutions, and broke them; he wiſhed to conduct himſelf with fortitude, but he feared he ſhould diſplay ſome weakneſs at parting.—Parting! the idea awoke a new train of images, which both pleaſed and diſturbed him. He was involved in perplexity, and after two hours further deliberation, he reſolved—firmly reſolved—not to be divided from Emily.

When he met Mr. Seldon at the breakfaſt table, he learned from that gentleman

gentleman that his intention was to quit the borough on the following day. "You go with us in the coach, Barclay," he continued, "unleſs you prefer an horſe. My ſtay in London will not exceed a fortnight; and if you will accompany us into the north, we ſhall be very happy in your ſociety. But ſhould you wiſh to ſpend the ſummer in town, I beg you will indulge the inclination. I will ſay nothing to influence you, but I wiſh you may determine on the latter, becauſe you can the better inform me of the movements in the political world."

Barclay bowed, and having expreſſed his obligations, aſſured Mr. Seldon that he ſhould remain in town, and endeavour to form his ſervices to his

ſatisfaction

ſatisfaction and pleaſure. Mr. Seldon ſoon after withdrew, and Miſs Caroline retired to her chamber, with the perſuaſion that ſhe ſhould be haunted by the nine ladies of ſong. Barclay haſtened to Emily, without having changed his mind reſpecting leaving her; although he had, unthinkingly, and unequivocally, aſſured Mr. Seldon of his future ſervices. The night had been ſomewhat reſtleſs to him, and the morning was unreſreſhing. His face was not ſo florid as Emily had ſeen it, and his eyes were dull, heavy, and—in ſhort—they ſeemed to ſpeak internal diſtreſs.

"Heavens! Barclay," ſhe cried, with unfeigned anxiety, "are you not well?"

"Well! Emily; how can I poſſibly be well, when your cruelty and indifference are ſo evident."

"That reproof, ſir ——."

"Oh, Emily! do not cenſure me. I am no ſtranger to your perfections. You are good and amiable; but, pardon me if I add, you are unkind to Barclay. I love you, Emily, and you have made the like ſweet confeſſion to me; but to what purpoſe? Did I not know your mind to be ſuperior to falſe ſentiment, I ſhould ſwear that you were guided by caprice."

Emily was a weak hearted girl: there was a particle of ſevere reproof

mixed with the compliment, and ſhe could ſcarcely reſtrain her tears.

"I have pained you, my dear girl," continued Barclay, "but believe me I did not deſign it. I came purpoſely to tell you, Emily, that I am reſolved not to be divided from you, and that I intend to break my engagement with Mr. Seldon, liberal as he has been, and ſuffer him to purſue his journey without me."

"And for what purpoſe would you commit this raſh—pardon me—this abſurd action?"

"In order," replied Barclay, "that I may again enter into the company of

Mr. Tinſel, and live under the eyes of Emily."

"And could you really condeſcend; could you, with ſuch a proſpect before you, turn again into ſo rugged and tedious a path?"

"Yes, and, accompanied by you, purſue it eternally. Wherever you are, I am reſolved to be. Your frowns, Emily, ſhall not prevent me from following you; my aſſiduity ſhall make you kind, and my love ſhall raiſe your beſt ſentiments. If you conſent to marry me, I will accompany you, with rapture, to London; but if you will not liſten to this propoſal, I will again make the application I have alluded to."

Emily

Emily bluſhed, and after ſhe found him determined, begged him not to reject the favours of Mr. Seldon.

"And does my Emily conſent?" cried Barclay, with a countenance of joy.

"She does," replied Emily, giving him her hand; "ſhe conſents to be the partner of your future days; to partake of your pleaſures, and to ſhare all your ſorrows. Heaven proſper the union! and though in me you may find an unportioned wife, yet I will bring for my dowry virtue and affection!"

Barclay would have expreſſed a thouſand raptures, but Emily poſitively refuſed

refuſed to hear him; he, however, ſpoke of his future proſpects, with animation, and aſſured himſelf of happineſs.

I hope none of my readers will cenſure Emily, or accuſe her of improper behaviour, for this ready acquieſcence. It is certainly, in ſuch caſes, better to avow our ſentiments with candour, than conceal them with hypocriſy. Emily bore an unfeigned affection for Barclay, and valued his happineſs and proſperity. She refuſed to accompany him to London, but gave him the aſſurance that ſhe would follow him in the courſe of a fortnight; he therefore took a corner of Mr. Seldon's carriage, and had the honour of being drawn

drawn out of the borough by that gentleman's hearty conſtituents.

Emily obſerved her promiſe; ſhe arrived in London on the very day that Mr. Seldon had left it. Barclay received her with rapture, and ſhe acknowledged her pleaſure. He immediately provided lodgings, and ſhortly after her arrival, they ratified their vows at the altar.